

CURRENT HISTORY

A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs



RUSSIA AND EURASIA

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"Highly visible changes are taking place in Russia's foreign policy. It is becoming more forceful every day, and in many cases, much more direct and independent. What is behind these changes and what can they bring to the world and to Russia? Is there any basis for regarding them, as many do, not as the defense of national interests but as a 'new imperialism?' Unfortunately, there is."

Seems Like Old Times? Russia's Place in the World

BY YURI N. AFANASYEV

Today, the problem of Russia's relationship with the West is being approached primarily through concepts such as integration, partnership, and building a larger Europe. These ideas are secured by documents that represent new unions and agreements: the Partnership for Peace, the Russian Federation, and the European Union, for example. They are constantly used in official statements by leaders in Europe, America, and Asia. They also figure as basic premises in projects developed on the Russo-Asian side, such as the Eurasian Union and Reintegration of Post-Soviet Space. A new global strategy is being developed with these concepts, a strategy intended to replace the cold war, which was a struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States and their allies for world domination. Now the strategy of struggle is to be replaced with the strategy of peace.

The question, then, is whether peace in Russia and between Russia as part of the West, can be achieved by using these concepts, or more precisely, by using only these concepts.

My answer is a negative one.

In themselves, these concepts are fine and there is nothing intrinsically negative about them. Their inadequacy and unsuitability for creating a new world equilibrium—for a modern restructuring of the Euro-

pean continent—lies in their excessively abstract nature and lack of concreteness.

Russia does not exist in a historical vacuum. Knowledge of this cannot be tossed aside—it must be overcome. And that means the path for Russia's integration into Europe, if it is to be considered a real strategy (which is also under question), must not involve clinging to its expansionist past but demands its liberation from this burden of history.

How is it actually proceeding?

In the opinion of many Russian experts, Russia remains one of the most militarized countries in the world. Its armed forces, including internal troops, border guards, and volunteers, is 3.5-million strong, while 14 million people are employed in military-related activities—one-fifth the country's labor force. The proportion of people serving in the military will remain two to four times higher in Russia's population than in the other G-7 country at least until the year 2000. Because 20 percent of the country's GNP is spent on military needs, Russia's infrastructure is suffering. Over 60 percent of the communication lines and railroads require repair. And 40 million Russians live in environmentally devastated areas.

Retaining the present level of militarization has made instability and permanent crisis the norm for modern Russia.

The nostalgia some Russians feel for the Soviet Union is manifest in various concepts of reintegration: within the former borders, or without the Baltic states; in a unitary form, or as a confederation. Unfortunately, these concepts are not only for symposia, but serve as the basis for real state policy. Russia's expenses for

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reintegration have been, according to one specialist, 10 to 20 percent of GNP. The reintegration processes are slowing down the modernization of enterprises that are already obsolete and are thereby a hindrance to Russia's economic development.

RETYING THE TIES THAT BIND

Reintegration is also hampering Russia's political development. Russia is being forced to adapt its political system to that of the former republics of the Soviet Union, which show no sign of a consistent reform policy. Since democracy and a market economy have not yet established themselves as the normal and only possible basis for a healthy integration in the post-Soviet space, the only way to unite heterogeneous and no longer compatible parts of the scattered Union is through force.

Highly visible changes are taking place in Russia's foreign policy. It is becoming more forceful every day, and in many cases, much more direct and independent. What is behind these changes and what can they bring to the world and to Russia? Is there any basis for regarding them, as many do, not as the defense of national interests but as a "new imperialism?" Unfortunately, there is.

Russia's military doctrine holds that the country's interests extend to the entire territory of the former Soviet Union. Its attempts to impose a foreign policy on all the countries of the former European socialist camp are making things difficult for millions of people who had believed they were rid once and for all of Moscow's control.

Until quite recently, Russia had been—and in some cases still is—waging undeclared wars in many parts of the former Soviet Union, wars that could be characterized as imperial.

Evermore blatant is the desire to force upon the former Soviet republics the role once played by the socialist countries: a buffer zone between Russia and the outside worlds.

The attempt at a civilized divorce did not work: there are arguments over the Black Sea Fleet and the Crimea, over nuclear arms and space control centers. Now we see the wish (unfazed by the enormous costs) to employ economic and military measures to force the former republics to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for tighter integration. But, unlike the Soviet Union, Russia is unwilling to take responsibility for what happens in the former republics: neither the bloodshed in Georgia nor the starvation in Armenia. In other words, Russia wants military, political, and economic control over the former Union republics, but not the responsibility for maintaining, at Russian levels, the living standards in Uzbekistan, infant mortality rates in Azerbaijan, or health care in Tajikistan.

These imperial impulses are manifested in many regions. The artificially created Transdniester Republic is supported in order to put pressure on the Moldo-

vans. There is an analogous situation in the Caucasus. Russia was in fact at war against Georgia, even though the authorities denied it, and the public still does not have a clear picture of Russia's role there. First Russia supported the Abkhazians in their desire for independence from Georgia. But when things went too far, it supported Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze—and at the same time forced Georgia to join the CIS.

There are many reasons behind the Azeri-Armenian conflict, but Russia's behavior here is not impeccable. In particular, the interests of Russian business affected (through pressure on the government) the course of military action in this region. For instance, Azerbaijan's attempt to organize an oil consortium that excluded Russia quickly resulted in the occupation of two parts of Azerbaijan by the Karabakh army and its breakthrough to the Iranian border. But as soon as Russia's Lukoil was included in the consortium, the Azerbaijani army quickly won back the occupied territories.

However, it is the situation in Central Asia that is most troubling. Russia remains in an undeclared war, a war without expressed goals. Russia is fighting in Tajikistan on the side of a puppet, pro-Uzbek regime—a reactionary regime that ruthlessly suppresses the tiniest shoots of free thought and democracy. Yet Russia's democratic minister of foreign affairs, Andrei Kozyrev, went to Tajikistan's neighbors, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, to persuade them to join Russia in this conflict, so that Russia could hide behind the flags of several countries, as it did during the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Many observers attribute the changes in Russia's official foreign policy to internal Russian causes. It is also noted that Russia's foreign policy course has been developing a worrying independence from its national interests and is becoming responsive to the political situation in the country. In particular, this course is determined by the government's desire to snatch the patriotic banner from the opposition, by the Kremlin's greater attention to the inner voice of provincial Russia. That voice is one suffering from an inferiority complex—after the collapse of the Union and the loss of former glory—it is the voice of a country that feels humiliated and insulted.

THE PAST PRESENT

These are the causes of the recent changes in Russia's foreign policy. But they are not exhaustive. There are other causes, more general and more profound.

The most succinct way to put it is that modern Russia is pre-modern. Russia's history, geopolitics, centuries of absolutism, and 75 years of Soviet totalitarianism have led it to fall behind the modern world technologically and politically. But Russia still has military might. And so it knocks at the door of the modern world, offering what it has—its Asiatic nature.

For example, Russia made a big splash last year in the world market with its aluminum, upsetting the world with its cheap price for the metal, and ended up with an apparent profit. But how did Russia do it? It produced aluminum with obsolete, energy-wasting technology. Oleg Soskovets keeps Russia in its obsolete state by artificially controlling energy prices. He can maintain the pre-modern in a modern world because he is all-powerful economically, with 14 ministries and departments under him, as well as all the powers that do not wish to join reform. And Soskovets is not alone. For many centuries all the excesses and aberrations in Russia's economy have been diligently preserved by people like Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. And that is why Russia sells what sows anxiety, unbalance, and death—weapons, missiles, and military consultation.

The same situation prevails in politics: the former glory without a stable state, democracy, or economic base. This is manifested in surprising foreign policy actions, such as the Bosnian or the Near East initiatives, which show a desire to affirm an independent role in the international arena without the necessary material base to support it. Think back to Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev's parody in Stockholm in December 1992. Then the foreign policy of the opposition was a nightmare, and he took an action unprecedented in diplomatic history: a paradoxical statement of its program as if it were his own. It was his way of keeping the nightmare from becoming a reality. Who would have thought then that just a few months later Kozyrev himself would be the instrument of that policy?

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY OBVIOUS

In light of these statements, it would not be hard to imagine what would happen to issues such as integration, partnership, and building a Europe from Brest to the Urals, if they were to become instruments for including Russia in a world strategy.

The zone of instability in Europe would expand significantly. And not only because of the direct inclusion of Russia and its problems into Europe. The ramifications would be enormous. Even now the West silently accepts the ex-Soviet space and the former socialist countries as a zone of Russia's special interests and influence. But if the right to use military and economic force within that zone is accepted, there is no reason for that standard not to be expanded to the rest of the world. France could follow Russia's example and "integrate" Luxembourg, Germany could integrate Poland's western regions, and so on. Pre-modern norms cannot be the basis of today's world strategy.

What then is the alternative?

The most basic answer is step-by-step procedures in time and pluralism in approaches and solutions.

As a positive example of a step-by-step realization of a major strategy, we can take the "Agreement on the Creation of an Economic Union." This proposes,

ultimately, the re-creation, on a new market-oriented basis, of a single economic space, where goods, capital, and labor forces move freely. All the countries of the CIS signed the agreement, including Ukraine at an associate member level. The agreement lays out the steps for the formation of a complex mechanism that would be the full-fledged economic union. Each step has to be prepared thoroughly and based on the mutual interests of all parties, taking into account the realities of the situation. Steps cannot be skipped. This approach presumes movement from the simple to the more complex, from relatively elementary forms of integration to a more developed and profound one, say, from a multicurrency monetary system to a currency union, from relations on the principles of free trade through a customs union to a free market.

Yet I must make a very important proviso for Russia: this example is still only on the level of intentions. The realization of any intention in Russia, as a rule, has a very wide range of deviations.

It is much harder to come up with a positive example of geopolitical pluralism, even on the level of intentions. For example, the military and political union of the CIS countries: if it is possible between Russia and Belarus, it is questionable with Ukraine. After all, Ukraine is most concerned with questions of security from Russia, and Russia is worried about the dangers from Ukraine. Therefore, what is needed is not a military and political union but a search for other solutions within a broader European security framework.

The situation is more complicated and contradictory in the Caucasus and in Central Asia. There integration demands an even greater pluralism. Numerous republics in these regions have their own political, defense, and regional interests that not only do not coincide with Russian ones, but openly contradict them. Added to that are historical traditions and religious preferences that are far from pro-Russian. An ally relationship with these republics could drag Russia into ethnic, clan, and religious conflicts that are alien to its own interests.

In other words, Russia must first discover for itself the answer to the question, "What is Russia?" A unitarian state? A multinational empire? Where is its place among the former republics of the Soviet Union and among the former socialist countries?

The most oft-repeated word in Russia lately is "stabilization." Everyone uses it like an incantation. But stabilization of what? Of the economy that formed in the Soviet Union? Or that formed over the years of the "democratic" political system? Then a democratic Russia is not to be.

No! Russia's search for itself and for its place in the modern world will be successful only if it is based on a pluralistic approach. The world of Russia and the worlds surrounding it are very different. And the same approach to all these worlds cannot be successful. ■

"If a major change of policy or regime occurs in Russia, there is obviously danger of a reaction against the foreign country that has been strongly advocating and financing the economic and political policies being rejected."

America's Russia Policy: The Triumph of Neglect

BY JERRY F. HOUGH

People may look back on the 1990s as a turning point in history. The twenty-first century will feature the rise of Asian superpowers with populations of more than 1 billion people being subjected to the same political and ethnic turmoil that industrialization and urbanization produced in Europe in the past. The possibility that dangerous populist leaders may come to power in the region is bringing the Europeans—including the Russians and the Americans—together. Indeed, we may be seeing the end of the even older schism within Christianity between Rome and Byzantium and the end of the rift between the Judeo-Christian and Islamic worlds. Western civilization, after all, began in Egypt and what is now Iraq, and it may well become a cohesive political force.

Yet little of this is reflected in American foreign policy debates. Except for a vague "strategic partnership" that is seldom defended, no broad pattern for international relations after the end of the cold war is publicly discussed. Instead, attention has focused on crises in some of the world's most strategically insignificant countries—Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, North Korea, Rwanda, and Somalia.

The crucial element in the reconciliation of the "Europeans" or of "Rome" and "Byzantium" is the end of the enmity between Russia and the West that marked most of the twentieth century. The thaw began at the end of the Reagan administration, and continues under the present one.

Spokesmen for the administration of President Bill Clinton claim Russia is the administration's great foreign policy success. Critics are much less charitable, although their criticisms are contradictory. Some think that the administration has been too cautious in accepting Russia, and others that it is naive about a potential Russian threat. Some damn it for not offering

a new version of the Marshall Plan to help Russia, while other voices object that money is being poured down a rat hole. Some say the administration neglects the 14 other former Soviet republics, but some fear that the key relationship with Russia is too often hostage to relations with the others. Many see elements of all these policies in the Clinton approach and so believe the administration has no real Russia policy, except the appeasement of Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

This last assessment is not exactly accurate. Any intelligent policy must be multifaceted. The problem is that different bureaucratic units and officials are associated with different facets of policy. Thus the administration has a policy of strategic partnership, pushed by Strobe Talbott of the State Department; one of economic reform based on shock therapy, determined within the Treasury Department largely by Undersecretary Lawrence Summers; and one of promoting democracy defined as plebiscitary presidential rule, associated with National Security Adviser Anthony Lake. Unfortunately, these policies are not fully consistent with each other.

With the administration focusing on domestic matters and its makers of foreign policy concentrating on other areas of the world, there has been no strong hand forcing a reconciliation of the different policies. The greatest risk to the administration—because it poses the greatest risks for Russia—comes from the fact it is pushing an economic policy that has produced a depression with a decrease in production of some 50 percent since January 1991. The July 9 issue of *The Economist*, a magazine that has long been pro-Yeltsin, noted a major drop in tax collection that "could cause the collapse of the state—and with it the market"; it also charged the Russian government with having "nothing recognizable as a coherent macroeconomic policy."

The Russian political system features the appointment from above of state governors, mayors, and county leaders. Neither the dissolved Congress of

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People's Deputies nor the bicameral parliament elected in December has significant power. State and local governments have been dependent on allocations from Moscow, having no tax sources of their own. Boris Yeltsin himself was elected in 1991 under the old Communist system as "governor" of a large "state" in a union he was pledging to support. He has feared to submit himself to an election in independent Russia, now almost three years old, and his spokesmen are talking about postponing the presidential election scheduled for 1996. A public opinion poll before the December parliamentary election found 9 percent of Russians approving Yeltsin's activity fully and 27 percent approving on the whole, compared with 53 percent with negative views.¹

If a major change of policy or regime occurs in Russia, there is obviously danger of a reaction against the foreign country that has been strongly advocating and financing the economic and political policies being rejected. The December election poll found that 54 percent of Russians thought the West was following a policy of weakening Russia with its economic advice, 28 percent thought not, and 18 percent were uncertain. Thus a big change in Russia might well endanger the geostrategic relationship the United States has been attempting to build.

TERMS OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The basic geostrategic policy of the Clinton administration toward the former Soviet Union—the development of a "strategic partnership" with Russia—seems a continuation of a policy articulated by Bush administration Secretary of State James Baker on the creation of a community "from Vladivostok to Vancouver" across the Atlantic. The word "partner" denotes a rejection of the old concepts of enemy or rival but a reluctance to use "ally"; Russia, like other former Communist countries and republics, is being brought into associate membership in NATO, but not full membership.

The justification for such a partnership is twofold. First, as indicated earlier, the probable threats in the next century will come from large Asian countries with nuclear weapons, where ethnic, economic, and political turmoil may bring populist leaders such as a Hitler,

Mussolini, or Juan Perón (perhaps in religious form, like the Ayatollah Khomeini) to power. Russia with its 150 million people—one could even say the former Soviet Union with its 300 million—borders on major Asian countries. Russia is particularly worried by what Karen Elliott House in the February 7 *Wall Street Journal* called "the looming threat of a militarizing autocratic China." Hence it has a compelling national interest—recognized by top conservative generals of the past decade such as Sergei Akhromeyev, Mikhail Moiseyev, and former Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi—to move into an alliance with the West and give its high-technology industries full access to global technology and investment. By the same token, if threatening leaders ever come to power in any of the large countries of Asia, the West has a vital interest in having a front-line ally of Russia's size. Indeed, the knowledge that Russia and the West are in partnership may deter the rise of future Saddam Husseins.

The second argument for the strategic partnership is that it is necessary to restrain Russia and reduce the potential threat it poses to its neighbors. NATO was always described as a defensive alliance against the Soviet Union, but it was initiated by France, which was first of all concerned about Germany. From France's perspective—and not only France's—NATO's real purpose was "to keep America in, the Soviet Union out, and Germany down," as a British peer once expressed it.

The United States hoped NATO would end the conflict between Germany and England that had disrupted American ethnic relations twice in the century. Resistance to NATO arose in the old isolationist, German-American centers, basically because it solidified the division of Germany. Senator Robert Taft from German-American Cincinnati led the fight against the ratification of NATO, and Senator Joseph McCarthy represented Wisconsin, the most German-American state. However, the election of the first German-American president, Dwight Eisenhower, who strongly supported NATO, basically laid this issue to rest. With German-Americans a key element of the Republican Party, it is unsurprising that every postwar Republican president was associated with a policy of improved relations with the Communist world needed for the reunification of Germany. The policy was spectacularly successful in ending centuries of conflict both within western Europe and among western European immigrants. The latter came to think of themselves simply as "whites" rather than German-Americans, English-Americans, and so forth.

While the United States has had few ethnic Russians among its immigrants, it is hoped the strategic partnership will do the same thing for Russia and its relationship with its neighbors that NATO did for Germany's relationship with its neighbors. If Russia, the other

¹The survey was led by Timothy Colton of Harvard University, Susan Goodrich Lehmann of Columbia University, and myself and was conducted by regional sociologists in Russia. It was financed by the MacArthur Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, the National Science Foundation, and the Brookings Institution. These results are based on the answers of 34,000 respondents in 34 regions of Russia, excluding the former autonomous republics. For the first results, see Jerry F. Hough, "The Russian Election of 1993: Public Attitudes Toward Economic Reform and Democratization," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 1994), pp. 1–37.

countries of what was once the Soviet Union, eastern Europe, and western Europe are brought into NATO (presumably renamed so that it is no longer simply North Atlantic), perhaps the peoples who have fought with each other for centuries will over decades come to think of themselves more as Europeans than as implacable enemies.

THE PERILS OF PARTNERING

To a large extent the strategic relationship has worked out well so far. It has reduced the pressure from eastern European countries (and their supporters in the United States) to maintain NATO as an anti-Russian alliance by making them but not Russia or any of the other post-Soviet states full members. The United States and Russia have tried, if hesitantly, to act as strategic partners to end the war in Bosnia. The abolition of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (the Western institution that oversaw sensitive exports to the socialist bloc), and planned cooperation on the space station, assure the Russian military that the national defense industry will be allowed access to advanced foreign technology and will be able to reach world levels.

There have, however, been problems in implementation. With the rationale for the strategic relationship not articulated, officials with other priorities or with old suspicions of the Soviet Union often intentionally or unintentionally fail to take it into account. Yeltsin has complained bitterly, and with justice, that the promised changes in technological restrictions have not been instituted by the United States. Latvia was accorded most favored nation trade status only in July, and Russia still has not been granted it.

In other cases Russia has been unnecessarily offended through insensitivity. It has sometimes not been consulted beforehand on steps regarding Bosnia or North Korea. Russians were angered by the exclusion of Russian troops and even veterans from celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day in June, which could have reminded people of a Russian-American strategic partnership that saved the world from fascism. When the military planned joint maneuvers, the United States insisted that they be conducted in Russia, which raised hackles among Russian nationalists who saw American troops on Russian soil as a symbol of Russia's defeat in the cold war. In contrast, Russian troops participating in maneuvers in the United States would have had a different symbolic meaning and would have produced a positive reaction among Americans.

The more serious potential problems with the strategic relationship have to do with Russia's relations with its fellow former republics. No one seriously believes Russia is likely to intervene militarily in the once Communist countries of eastern Europe, but Russia has troops firmly entrenched in the southern

former republics and is in practice financing Ukraine's military. Contentious issues like control of the Black Sea Fleet and the large naval base at Sevastopol in Crimea in Ukraine may flare up, and there are military conflicts in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus in which the Russians may see themselves as peacekeepers. It is probable—and desirable—that most of the former republics will become more integrated economically with Russia. The possibility of real Russian domination cannot be dismissed.

If the United States wants a strategic relationship with Russia because of potential problems in Asia, the other lands of what was once the Soviet Union should surely be included in the partnership. Indeed, the southern former republics are the ones that border on Asia in the critical belt from western China through Afghanistan and Iran to Turkey. Moreover, the United States does not want nuclear proliferation and has, for example, worked hard to bring Ukrainian nuclear weapons under Russia's control.

The trick is getting the post-Soviet states into a strategic partnership—and in most cases, into an economic common market of former republics—without rousing alarm about a new Russian empire, let alone actually helping create one, in a world where many worry about the rebirth of Russian imperialism.

At one level the Clinton administration has been careful in its handling of relations between Russia and its old comrades. Administration officials are aware that 25 million Russians live in former republics other than Russia and that the most likely cause of Russian military intervention would be riots by Russians there, accompanied by appeals for Moscow's help. On a visit to Latvia in July, Clinton warned against Russian intervention but also cautioned against a Latvian citizenship law that would have heavily discriminated against Russians who had long lived in the republic. In response, Latvia softened its law.

The administration in Washington has been most concerned about the Baltic states and most insistent on the withdrawal of Russian troops from their territory, moderately concerned about Ukraine, and quite relaxed about Russian domination of the Transcaucasian and Central Asian former republics. It has been even been plausibly charged that Russia voted in the United Nations Security Council to give the United States the right to invade Haiti in exchange for quiet American agreement to Russian intervention in the Transcaucasus to try to stop the wars that have for years racked Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, the three former republics there.

The presidential elections held in Ukraine and Belarus this summer have made the Clinton administration's task easier. The Belarusians gave a huge majority to a populist who advocates closer ties to Russia, while the Ukrainians rejected the incumbent, Leonid Kravchuk, and voted in Leonid Kuchma, the former director

of an SS-18 rocket plant, who has called for closer ties with Russia. Those who favor maximum independence for Ukraine and Belarus are disturbed by the election results, but those more concerned about geostrategic stability and the avoidance of civil war see them in a more favorable light.

The difference today between the "sovereignty" of an Italy and the "autonomy" of a province like Quebec is much smaller than in the past, and in the future it will be even less. Ukraine or Latvia will never again have the sovereignty of 1939; not even Germany or Great Britain has such sovereignty now. The road to the complex combination of autonomy and integration that characterizes the modern world will be difficult for peoples who know federation only as an incredibly overcentralized state. But the 1994 elections mark the first step along that road.

WHAT PRICE DEMOCRACY? OR ECONOMIC REFORM?

The troubles of the Clinton administration in the geostrategic realm need to be kept in perspective. Ethnic conflicts in places such as Bosnia and Rwanda as well as the rise of recent despots suggest there is a high probability of some very dangerous leader coming to power in some very large country. However, any such threat that would move Russia and the West to unite is not now visible, and the road to overcoming decades of enmity is bound to be bumpy.

The greater problem in administration policy is the contradiction between its geostrategic policy and the economic and political policies it has pushed vigorously in Russia.

The economic policy promoted by the administration—which has been the standard macroeconomic program of the International Monetary Fund and, to a lesser extent, the World Bank—involves, among other elements, a dramatic reduction in the deficit, a tight money policy, price liberalization, aggressive privatization of state-owned enterprises, a sharp reduction in subsidies to industry and agriculture, and an end to import tariffs and other restrictions on imports. The administration has poured financial aid into privatization in Russia.

The administration's political policy for Russia is full-fledged support for Boris Yeltsin as well as for the radicals who accepted the IMF program—people who generally called themselves democrats but who in reality supported a highly authoritarian political system. Both in December 1992 and March 1993 Yeltsin attempted a virtual coup against democratic institutions, but Clinton has consistently held that Yeltsin is, as he put it last March, "the chief voice for democracy, progress, and economic reform in Russia."

The administration's backing of Yeltsin is understandable, but it is surprising no effort was made to encourage the Russian president to cooperate with the

old parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies, which was quite democratically elected and which was willing to work with him if he followed a moderate economic policy. The Clinton administration propagated Yeltsin's charge that the Congress was undemocratic and provided financial support for the advertisements the Russian president used against the parliament in an April 1993 referendum. American democratization efforts supported the creation, after the violence late last year, of Gaidar's political party, Russia's Choice, numbering among its members many of the key radical figures of the government.

Just before Yeltsin's dissolution of the Congress September 21, the administration sent Treasury's Undersecretary for International Affairs Lawrence Summers to Moscow to talk about the conditions for impending IMF aid. Little information has emerged about this crucial trip, and it is difficult to be certain how much the trip was cause of the decisions Yeltsin was soon to make and how much it was an attempt to evaluate decisions that had already been made. In either case Gaidar was brought back as first deputy prime minister, and for the first time he really applied the shock therapy the IMF had been demanding. Bread prices were raised to the point where the daily minimum wage was roughly equal to the price of a loaf of bread in Moscow, and Gaidar promised a vigorous reduction of subsidies to industry beginning January 1 of this year.

Incredibly, this economic policy was introduced immediately before an election scheduled for December 12. Both Moscow radicals and the CIA were convinced that Russia's Choice and several semiallied parties could win the election even with this economic platform. They were shocked by the victory of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party in the party-list vote, and by that of a coalition of conservative-centrist forces in the single-member districts. One of the leaders of the Communist faction in the disbanded Congress, Ivan Rybkin, was elected speaker of the State Duma, the lower chamber of the new parliament.

In the wake of the election, United States Assistant Secretary of State Strobe Talbott suggested "less shock and more therapy," and Vice President Al Gore spoke about the need for a serious reassessment of policy. In this reassessment, however, the Treasury Department again emerged the winner. Even though it was clear Gaidar and Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov had been strongly repudiated by the people and would be removed any day, Clinton, at a Moscow summit meeting in January, fully endorsed the two officials and their program and asked that they be retained. As Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin continued the shock therapy this spring, the Clinton administration continued to applaud.

The economic impact was disastrous. Russia had been in a severe depression since 1990, and produc-

tion fell another 23 percent the first half of this year. Measurement of gross national product in a time of high inflation when the structure of production and prices is changing radically is a difficult and contentious process, but more reliable statistics on the production of concrete items show the same picture.

The CIA believes that privatization has gone well, that economic reform has turned the corner, and the future looks bright for the Russian economy. No one seems to notice any incompatibility between the reform and greater economic integration of Ukraine and Belarus with Russia—even though such integration has always been, both logically and in practice, closely linked with subsidized prices on Russian petroleum and raw materials.

A definitive evaluation of the Russian economic reform must await the passage of time, but meanwhile, the Clinton administration's policy is extremely risky. Elsewhere in the world, the administration is enthralled with China's economic success—and rightly so, since it has produced an average of 10 percent growth a year for 15 years, along with considerable marketization—and now says economics should override human rights considerations in United States policy toward China. But the Chinese economic model is precisely the opposite of the Russian model. It relies on agricultural reform and promotion of small-scale industry in the countryside (both almost absent in Russia); an export strategy based on components and manufactured goods (Russia exports almost none of either); high tariffs to protect infant industry; little privatization of state industry; subsidizing of state-owned concerns; and prevention of unemployment.

There are in fact many reasons for thinking the Chinese economic model superior. The failure of both the Gorbachev and Yeltsin regimes to introduce agricultural reform has been a great tragedy. The focus on industrial privatization has diverted the attention of all managers and entrepreneurs from normal investment and performance activities to acquisition of property, takeovers, and defense against takeovers. The failure to craft a coherent tariff policy to protect an energetic export policy is clearly contrary to Russian economic interests—and even to those of the American multinational corporations that want to invest in Russia.

If the past four years had produced the conditions for an upturn in the economy, the intense economic pain Russians have suffered might well be considered worthwhile, or at least politically tolerable. There is, however, little evidence pointing in this direction. The bulk of Russian taxes had been collected from state enterprises, and with the shock therapy applied since September, this source has begun to dry up. This

summer only 62 percent of the tax revenues projected in the budget were being collected, and the government increasingly attempted to control its spending through nonpayment of wages. Such arrears rose in June by 16 percent and stood at 3.4 trillion rubles in July—some 20 million man months of average salary.

OVERRIDING ANIMOSITY

If the economy does not begin to improve soon, the political situation in Moscow will become markedly unstable. Indeed, even economic improvement will not solve problems. Profitability will depend on large-scale layoffs, so far mainly postponed, and plants that make a profit will see strikes by workers seeking a piece of the pie. Virtually all private banks and investment funds are likely to collapse, as the wildly popular MMM fund did in July. The advertisements on the Moscow subway all offer interest rates of between 40 percent and 60 percent a year on foreign currency, and depositors are clearly being defrauded. If the funds in which citizens have deposited their privatization vouchers collapse, it will affect attitudes toward privatization.

The greatest potential threat to stability in Russia lies in the military, which is deeply suspicious of American intentions and has no interest in an economic policy that destroys heavy industry and the defense industry. If the drop in tax revenues threatens the financing of the armed forces, the military may very well intervene. But the really hard questions are liable to arise if strikes or demonstrations break out. Elite military units refused to storm the parliament building last October until Yeltsin lieutenants tricked them into exposing themselves so that one of their troops was killed by a sniper.² Military forces are highly unlikely to act to suppress popular strikes and demonstrations, and if they fail to do so, the regime will collapse.

Any major political change, either initiated by Yeltsin or directed against his government, will probably be accompanied by denunciations of Western economic advice. It is fairly certain to play into the hands of the forces in America that have been suspicious of the strategic partnership—all the more so if it is accompanied by more formal relations between Russia and the other union republics.

Nevertheless, within a year of the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the West began negotiations on a major agreement with the Soviet Union on Germany, even though Americans were being killed in Vietnam at the time. Powerful geostrategic and economic considerations tend to override other factors. Russia's military and its defense industry need integration into the global economy, and both Russia and the West have a compelling interest in the creation of a partnership—an alliance, even—"from Vladivostok to Vancouver." In the long and even the medium run, these interests are almost certain to prove decisive. ■

²See Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia* (New York: Times Books, 1994). This is a remarkably frank memoir that gives the reader a good sense of Yeltsin's suspicions, emotions, and doubts.

"Compared to the tumultuous previous three years, 1994 has proved a relatively stable period for post-Communist politics in Russia. . . [But] Russia is still midway into one of the greatest social, economic, and political transformations ever undertaken. . . Calm in the Kremlin does not necessarily signal the end of turmoil in society."

Russian Politics: The Calm Before the Storm?

BY MICHAEL McFAUL

Presidential Decree No. 1400, issued September 23, 1993, fundamentally altered the course of Russia's political transition. Debilitating polarization during the two years before between President Boris Yeltsin's government and parliament had resulted in the virtual collapse of the Russian state. As Yeltsin explained when he announced the decree: "All political institutions and politicians have been involved in a futile and senseless struggle aimed at destruction. A direct effect of this is the loss of authority of state power as a whole. . ."

In an attempt to resolve this impasse, Yeltsin's decree disbanded the 1,000-plus-member Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet, and simultaneously called for a referendum on a new constitution and elections for a new bicameral legislature, both to be held in December. But Decree No. 1400 could not be realized without bloodshed. Most members of the Congress of People's Deputies regretted but accepted Yeltsin's decree. However, a small, resolute group of deputies led by Congress Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov and Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi combined forces with militant fascist and Communist groups to defy the presidential initiative by occupying the "White House," the building that housed the Congress. The standoff ended on October 3 and 4 as military forces loyal to Yeltsin first thwarted an attack by parliamentary forces on the national televi-

sion station and the Moscow mayor's office, and then counterattacked by shelling the White House itself. Russia's peaceful revolution had ceased to be peaceful.

THE DECEMBER SURPRISE

The so-called "October events" created an inauspicious context for Russia's first post-Communist election. Voters were asked to go to the polls just two and a half months after one branch of the government had forcefully liquidated the other. More generally, the two-year interval between the fall of communism in August 1991 and the first national election had further tainted Russia's democratic beginning. Denied the opportunity to compete in elections during the euphoric moment after communism's collapse, almost all Russia's reformist political parties founded in 1990 and 1991 had decayed or disappeared by fall 1993. Without elections or parliamentary seats, Russian political parties had no *raison d'être*. During polarizing crises, including most notably the challenges to Yeltsin's presidency and the subsequent referendum on it in April 1993, Democratic Russia—the umbrella organization for dozens of anti-Communist movements and parties that had spearheaded the struggle against communism in 1990 and 1991—remobilized to play a crucial role in helping the forces of reform coalesce. When not engaged in these struggles, however, Democratic Russia took few constructive steps toward becoming a post-Communist political party. Thus no parties championing reform existed when Yeltsin announced the elections for the new parliament.

More important, much had happened, most of it bad, between the attempted coup of August 1991 that precipitated the end of the Soviet era and December 1993. Acute economic hardship in 1992 and 1993, including double-digit monthly inflation rates and catastrophic declines in production, helped sustain Soviet political groups such as the Communist and Agrarian Parties. Additionally, the collapse of the Soviet empire combined with these economic woes to stimu-

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late the development of extreme nationalist parties and movements. Under these circumstances (and also considering that the election was held in the winter and not, as has been traditional, in the spring) it is difficult to think of a worse time for a first election after communism.

Despite all this, most polls and political analysts predicted that Russia's proreform forces would win the largest share of the vote. After all, only several months earlier Russian voters had firmly supported Yeltsin and his economic reform policies in the April referendum. Russia's Choice, the liberal reformist electoral bloc headed by Yegor Gaidar, anticipated that it would win between 30 percent and 40 percent of the popular vote.¹ Polls conducted in October and early November suggested that Grigori Yavlinsky's Yabloko electoral bloc would garner as much as 20 percent of the popular vote. Even in the worst-case scenario, reformist electoral blocs were certain they would constitute a solid majority in the Duma, the new lower house.

They were wrong. To everyone's surprise, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party won 23 percent of the popular vote, and Russia's Choice only 16 percent. With totals for its parties counted together, the antireformist bloc received 43 percent of the vote compared with 34 percent for proreformist forces.

INVITATION TO DEFEAT

Without question, the explanation for this electoral outcome must begin with the economy and the "October events." Two years of radical economic reform had produced dislocation, discontent, and uncertainty about the future—a recipe for a vote for the opposition. Judging by recent elections results in Poland, Lithuania, and even Russia's own referendum that April, it should have shocked no one that a significant part of the electorate voted against those associated with market reforms.

Moreover, the use of military force by one branch of government against another must have fueled apathy about and antipathy toward the "democrats" and the "democratic process." Apathy was reflected in the low

¹The "popular vote" in the December 1993 elections actually represents only one of three ballots that voters cast in electing members of parliament. The 450 seats in the lower house were allocated according to a mixed system. Half went to candidates winning the most votes in single-constituency districts while the remaining 225 were allocated to parties according to a system of proportional representation for parties receiving at least 5 percent of the vote. The "popular" vote thus refers to how parties performed on the latter ballot. Balloting for the upper house employed a first-past-the-post system that awarded seats to the two candidates who received the highest number of votes in each district.

²Of those who did vote, more than 15 percent cast their ballot for "none of the above."

December 1993 Election Results

Electoral Bloc	Percentage of Popular Vote
Agrarian Party of Russia	8.0
Yabloko (Yavlinsky-Boldyrev-Lukin)	7.9
*Future of Russia-New Names	1.3
Russia's Choice (Gaidar)	15.5
*Civic Union	1.9
Democratic Party of Russia	5.5
*Dignity and Charity	0.7
Communist Party of the Russian Federation	12.4
*Constructive Ecological Movement	0.8
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	22.9
Party for Russian Unity and Accord	6.7
Women of Russia	8.1
*Russian Movement for Democratic Reforms	4.1

*These blocs did not receive the necessary 5 percent in order to gain seats through the system of proportional representation.

Source: *Byulleten'*, no. 1(12) (Moscow: Tsentral'noi Izbiratel'noi Komissii Rossiiskoi Federatsiya, 1994), p. 67.

voter turnout: despite being the first true multiparty election in more than 70 years, barely 50 percent of the electorate voted.² Polls indicate that the majority of those who did not vote would have supported reformist parties. Antipathy resulting from October, though more difficult to measure, surely contributed to the success of political groups not affiliated with either side in the tragic events, as disenchanted reformers cast their ballot for Yavlinsky and newly mobilized antireformers threw their support behind Zhirinovskiy.

These two factors, however, are not sufficient for explaining the election results. Opinion polls, while always suspect in Russia, had shown support for Russia's Choice at nearly 30 percent, while only 2 percent of those surveyed planned to vote for Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party. More proximate factors—factors that had little to do with shock therapy or the October events—also shaped this very different outcome.

First, the mixed electoral system for parliamentary races benefited the LDP. The system of proportional representation for parties used to apportion half the Duma seats allowed the party to ride on the coattails of its charismatic leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Capturing 23 percent of the popular vote on the party-preference list, the LDP won 57 seats in the Duma by this means. In single-constituency races, however, the party's can-

didates won only 5 seats in the Duma and none in the upper house, the Federal Council. In a pure majoritarian system, the Liberal Democratic Party would have won fewer than 10 seats.

Second, the LDP ran the most effective campaign. Given the short electoral season, television was the only effective means of campaigning. After Russia's Choice the well-funded LDP had more television time than any other party or bloc, and as an individual candidate Zhirinovskiy had more television exposure than any of the others. Equally important, Zhirinovskiy used his time very effectively. In his snappy, professionally produced commercials, he spoke in short sentences using simple language and addressed issues that concerned voters: housing for military officers, "unfair" prices in farmers' markets, and the need for more police officers for crime-ridden cities. He lambasted the government, saying it was composed of theoreticians who cared little about the people. He identified scapegoats—gangsters from the Caucasus, Jews, the West—for Russia's woes. In short, Zhirinovskiy explained everything and promised everything to everyone.

In turning from the success of Zhirinovskiy to the failures of the reformist forces, a significant factor was the split among "democrats." Proreform forces ran as four separate electoral blocs—Russia's Choice, Yabloko, Party for Russian Unity and Accord (PRES), and Russian Movement for Democratic Reform (RDDR)—rather than one. While there were nuanced ideological differences between the four, the real source of division was personal ambition. These divisions had several deleterious consequences. Because the vote for democratic parties in the party-preference balloting was split, the democratic defeat looked worse than it really was. (An electoral outcome in which a democratic coalition received 34 percent of the popular vote—the combined total for Russia's Choice, Yabloko, PRES, and the RDDR—would have looked quite different from the December outcome, in which the leading democratic party won just 15 percent.)

In terms of parliamentary seats, the democrats could have acquired an additional 10 or 11 seats had the RDDR and its 4 percent of the popular vote been part of one of the proreform parties that exceeded the 5 percent threshold. Even more important, however, was the effect of these splits on how the proreform parties conducted their campaigns. Gaidar and Yavlinskii spent most of their campaign time quarreling with each other rather than criticizing opponents such as Zhirinovskiy.

Perhaps the most significant factor in the electoral results was that Yeltsin did not participate in the elections. With members of his government divided among several blocs, the president not only did not side with any electoral bloc, but refrained from speaking about the elections at all. His only public statement

about the elections during the campaign was a 10-minute national television address in which he urged voters to approve his draft constitution. Yeltsin's nonparticipation left Russia's Choice without a strong, charismatic figure to rally support. In previous elections Yeltsin's backers had been of two distinct varieties: Western-oriented liberal reformers from major metropolitan areas such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Yekaterinburg (formerly Sverdlovsk), and anticorruption, anti-elite, anti-Moscow voters in medium-sized cities in Siberia and the Far East. While Russia's Choice could win the support of the former group, it had no chance with the latter without Yeltsin as their leader. It was captured instead by Zhirinovskiy.

Finally, the dreadful performance of the leading democratic bloc, Russia's Choice, must be fully appreciated within the context of the democrats' poor showing. Foremost among its weaknesses, Russia's Choice lacked organization. Formally, the bloc had united seven different political movements and organizations when it convened its founding congress last October, less than two months before the election. In reality, the bloc was an incomplete fusion of new government elites, both federal and regional, from the Russia's Choice movement with old grassroots activists from the Democratic Russia movement. The divisions between these two allies plagued the campaign effort in November and December. In many regions they were never resolved, resulting in several candidates from the same bloc running for one seat, handing Communists or nationalists the victory for as little as 15 percent of the vote.

These splits were especially costly, since they kept Russia's Choice from establishing any regional organization. Thousands of posters were sent but not displayed. Leaflets collected dust in regional offices. No coherent party message was developed that linked regional candidates to the Russia's Choice party-preference list. Many local elites from Russia's Choice who stood as candidates for single-constituency seats ran and won without identifying themselves as supporters of Russia's Choice.

Complementing this lack of organization was the absence of an effective campaign strategy. The bloc's chief strategist, Gennadi Burbulis, planned to create an image of a party already in power and destined to win in December. Russia's Choice leaders thus promised nothing to voters, and instead insolently asserted there was no alternative to their course of reform but a return to the Communist system. To the extent that they did explain the government's plan of action, Gaidar and others delivered long, monotonous, academic monologues on the macroeconomics of financial stabilization that were in stark contrast to the pithy, pointed ads aired by Zhirinovskiy.

This arrogant philosophy engendered a passive campaign. Little attempt was made to mobilize social

organizations to campaign for Russia's Choice. But perhaps the greatest strategic error was the bloc's failure to respond to Zhirinovskiy. Instead of spelling out the implications of the LDP leader's campaign promises—wars with most neighboring countries and possibly even with the United States—Russia's Choice decided not to challenge him directly. When it finally did in the last week of the campaign, the bloc paid for television time to run old Zhirinovskiy speeches. Hoping to scare people into voting against him, the free exposure instead helped establish Zhirinovskiy as the leading opposition candidate.

FROM CHAOS, ORDER?

Immediately after the election, most predicted continued instability if not civil war in Russia. Radical voices in Russia's Choice called on Yeltsin to liquidate the new parliament immediately and establish an authoritarian regime, saying this was the only way to avoid a fascist takeover. Resigning from the government after their electoral defeat, deputy prime ministers Yegor Gaidar and Boris Fyodorov predicted hyperinflation, price controls, and the end of privatization. Western commentators warned that a new imperial Russia would soon be haunting the West.³

In the long run these predictions may come true. But in the short run the exact opposite has been the case. Paradoxically, Russian politics has been more stable and "normal" during the first nine months of 1994 than in the first two years after communism. This political stability has in turn served to sustain economic reform, not derail it. So far this year, the monthly inflation rates have not once exceeded 10 percent, the voucher program for privatization was completed and the second stage of privatization and postprivatization restructuring announced, and price controls, while hinted at by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin immediately after the election, have not been reinstated. After Russia's Choice's defeat, Chernomyrdin boldly announced the "end of market romanticism." To date, however, the end of the romantic period has meant further consolidation of practical economic reform.

The More Powerful Government

Progress on the economic front has resulted, in part, from a stabilization of Russia's new political institutions and a formalizing of relations between them. While supporting Zhirinovskiy's LDP and other antireformist groups such as the Agrarian and Communist parties in the parliamentary elections, Russian voters also ratified Yeltsin's constitution. Compared to West-

ern constitutions, Russia's new basic law grants inordinate power to the executive branch of government. By laying out the political rules of the game, however, this document—the first post-Communist Russian constitution—has so far helped smooth and regulate relations between the president, the government, and the legislature.

The new constitution has also aided in preventing political intervention on economic issues. Under the Soviet constitution, the economy was hostage to the whims of the Congress of People's Deputies and the entire system of soviets subordinate to this "highest state organ." The new constitutional configuration of the Russian state gives the Russian parliament a consultative role rather than primary responsibility for reforming and managing the economy. An antireform or fascist president could use these new rules for far different ends, but for now this political reform has furthered economic reform.

This new institutional setting has allowed the prime minister to sustain most of the basic tenets of Gaidar's reform program. Chernomyrdin has been emboldened to maintain a tight fiscal budget by establishing real interest rates for government credits from the Russian Central Bank and curtailing government subsidies to state enterprises. Rather than responding to requests for spending from the Duma, Chernomyrdin's government submitted a federal budget to parliament this spring. With the (surprising) support of the Liberal Democratic Party, the budget was approved with only minor amendment.

Approval of a new privatization law proved more difficult, but again demonstrated the preeminence of the executive in the formulation of strategic economic policy. After heated debate the Duma failed to approve the government's draft law on privatization before its summer recess this July. The day after the chamber adjourned, Yeltsin signed Presidential Decree No. 1535, implementing by fiat what the Duma had rejected. But signaling his desire to cooperate with the Duma, Yeltsin included in his decree several amendments that had been suggested during parliamentary discussions. Likewise, the decree explicitly stated that it is a temporary stand-in for a new law on privatization. With the decree in place, however, it will be difficult for the Duma to adopt a fundamentally different privatization law without risking major confrontation with Yeltsin.

Informally, Chernomyrdin also has established his authority as sole leader of the government. It must be remembered that Chernomyrdin has been prime minister since December 1992. Nonetheless, the government was still split and Chernomyrdin's personal authority questioned so long as radical reformers such as Gaidar and Fyodorov retained portfolios. After the election only one senior member of Gaidar's original reform team—the deputy prime minister in charge of

³See, for example, Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 2 (March/April 1994).

The Duma's Makeup

Party Fraction	Leader	Number of Deputies
Liberal Democratic Party	Vladimir Zhirinovskiy	57
Russia's Choice	Yegor Gaidar	71
*New Regional Politics	Vladimir Medvedev	64
Agrarian Party	Mikhail Lapshin	55
Communist Party	Gennadi Zyuganov	45
Yabloko	Grigori Yavlinsky	27
Party for Russian Unity and Accord	Sergei Shakrai	33
Women of Russia	Yekatarina Lakhova	23
Democratic Party of Russia	Nikolai Travkin	15
***"Union 12th of December"	Boris Fyodorov	28
**Russian Path	Sergei Baburin	14
**Derzhava (Power)	none	5

*Fraction formed after the elections.

**Factions formed after the elections that do not have the requisite 35 members to be formally registered as a fraction. (Blocs with fewer than 35 members that were formed before the elections are still registered as fractions.)

Source: *Federalnoe Sobranie*, no. 4 (Moscow: "Panorama," July 14, 1994). Derzhava, the faction of five members at the end of this table, is made up of former members of the Liberal Democratic Party.

privatization, Anatoli Chubais—remained in Chernomyrdin's government.

The government, in fact, in no way represents the balance of forces elected in December. Civic Union, the bloc claiming to represent Chernomyrdin's "centrist," "industrialist" orientation, won only 2 percent of the popular vote, but Chernomyrdin's government is dominated by like-minded people. At the same time the LDP, which captured 23 percent of the vote, has no representative in the government, while Russia's Choice (having received 16 percent of the vote) and the Communist and the Agrarian parties (20 percent) have only one representative each in the government.

In addition to this consolidation within his government, Chernomyrdin's political stature has also risen because of Yeltsin's decline. Since last October, Yeltsin's popular support has fallen gradually, reaching its nadir this summer. Yeltsin's infrequent public appearances, in contrast with Chernomyrdin's daily exposure, have created the impression that the prime minister is running the country. With questions about Yeltsin's health a continual topic of gossip, many observers and political leaders have begun to discuss Chernomyrdin as Russia's next president.

The Less Fractious Parliament

Few predicted that any good would come from the newly elected parliament, especially the Duma. A body that includes ultranationalists, neo-Communists, and

neoliberals was, by definition, not destined to govern. After one of the chamber's first acts—a grant of amnesty to those who had participated in the August 1991 aborted putsch and the October 1993 "events"—many Yeltsin supporters reiterated their plea for him to dissolve the lower house before polarization between the executive and legislative branches of government crystallized.

Since the amnesty vote, however, both the Duma and Federal Council have avoided direct confrontation with the president and the government. Possibly because of these threats of disbandment, as well as the chastening effect of what had happened to the previous parliament, Duma deputies focused on constructing an effective organization; institutional survival was the imperative. Their first and perhaps most important act was to create real incentives for deputies to organize as "fractions"—Russia's equivalent of a parliamentary party. For example, chairmanships of committees were allocated proportionally according to fraction size. Deputies elected in single-constituency districts could only chair committees if they joined a fraction. Similarly, deputies voted to create a Duma Council comprised of representatives from each fraction and committee, and this council was accorded the power to set the legislative calendar. To date the organizational decisions have stimulated the consolidation of the multiparty parliament. Whereas the vast majority of deputies in the old congress were "independents,"

only 11 representatives in the current legislature have not joined a political party or fraction.

The reputation and effectiveness of the Duma have also been enhanced by the conduct of its officers. The speaker, Ivan Rybkin, from the Agrarian Party, has proved extremely adept at reaching compromise with all fractions in the Duma as well as working cooperatively with other branches of government. From Gaidar to Zhirinovsky, almost all deputies have praised Rybkin for his outstanding leadership during a difficult time. Without detracting from Rybkin's personal accomplishment, the new organization of parliament has also served to lessen tensions between members and their leaders. Unlike in the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies, Rybkin's office does not maintain monopoly control over committee chair appointments, staff assignments, or internal financial questions (including perks for individual deputies) in the Duma. These and other organizational changes have helped the Duma function more like a legislative body than its predecessor.

Parliament's upper house, the Federal Council, is deliberately not organized along party lines. Instead, members of this chamber have stronger regional affiliations; 42 of them are "heads of administration," equivalent to the governor of an American state. The new constitution has relegated the Federal Council to a role closer to a consultative body concerning federal issues than a lawmaking legislative organ. As political decentralization continues, the real power and interest of the council's regional leaders remains at the provincial and republic level.

The Inchoate Political Forces

The relative stability in government and parliament has not been reflected in a commensurate consolidation of political parties or civic organizations. While electoral blocs coalesced quickly to participate in the December elections, it remains uncertain whether they will be around for the next parliamentary elections, scheduled for the end of 1995. The creation of new parties, a reshuffling of allies, and a reorientation of many existing political organizations are under way across the political spectrum.

Among liberal reformist parties, disaggregation—not consolidation—continues. Immediately after the December elections, leaders from several reformist groups called for the formation of one prodemocratic, antifascist coalition. Though a congress to create such an organization is scheduled for this October, little

progress has been made in constructing a workable coalition. On the contrary, the electoral blocs of December have begun to split rather than unite with other parties and movements. Four separate groups have emerged from the remnants of the Russia's Choice bloc: Democratic Russia, which is planning to become a party this fall; the political party Democratic Russia's Choice, headed by Gaidar, which held its founding congress in June; Russia's Choice Movement; and the 12th of December faction in the Duma.

Yabloko is also showing signs of disintegration. Yuri Boldyrev, one of the three bloc's original leaders, has effectively quit because of sharp disagreements with Yavlinsky. Likewise, two electoral partners in the December elections—the Social Democratic Party of Russia and the Republican Party of Russia—are also considering leaving. After much hesitation Yavlinsky has begun to organize a national Yabloko movement in major regions throughout Russia, but it remains to be seen how successful this new association will be in an already crowded field. The Party for Russian Unity and Accord has taken few steps toward further organization, but has resisted invitations to join forces with other movements and parties. The Russian Movement for Democratic Reform, after failing to cross the 5 percent threshold in the December elections, has all but disappeared.

Centrists may run the government, but centrist parties and organizations are also in disarray. Civic Union, once considered the most powerful political group in Russia, has all but disappeared after its dismal showing in December. Nikolai Travkin's Democratic Party of Russia, the one former Civic Union coalition member to break the 5 percent barrier, has also begun to decay with Travkin's neglect of party activities since his appointment as deputy prime minister. The New Regional Politics fraction has pretensions to form a new centrist party focused on regional and industrial issues; however, voting records for this fraction indicate that its deputies have few common issues beyond being from regions outside Moscow and St. Petersburg. Finally, Yuri Skokov, the former head of the Security Council, who is closely associated with the military-industrial complex, has begun courting allies to create yet another new party. The "center" thus remains amorphous.

Since December the most active political groups outside parliament have been those affiliated with the so-called "red-brown" coalition—nationalist and Communist organizations such as the Liberal Democratic Party, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, and new Communist patriotic groups such as Aleksandr Rutskoi's Derzhava (Power) and Soglasie vo imya Rossii (Accord in the Name of Russia). The term "red-brown coalition" has always been a misnomer since ultranationalist and neo-Communist groups have never succeeded in forming a durable united front.⁴

⁴The National Salvation Front, created during fall 1992 and banned after the "October events," was the closest approximation to a united front of Communist and nationalist organizations. Significantly, Zhirinovsky was not a member of this coalition.

Extremist nationalists such as Zhirinovsky have been shunned by Communists, while many patriotic groups reject Communist ideology as being just as Western, and thus as alien to the Russian soul, as capitalism. However, figures like Rutskoi and Gennadi Zyuganov have managed to close the gap between patriots and Communists by concentrating on themes important to both camps, such as distress over the dissolution of the Soviet Union and contempt for the mafia-dominated market. With polls indicating that more than two-thirds of the Russian people have similar views regarding the collapse of the Soviet Union and crime, this political orientation could attract new support in the near future.

Winning an election, of course, is only one way to power for authoritarian leaders. The heads of several militant groups—including Zhirinovsky and Rutskoi—have again hinted they will assume power by any means necessary. If they try, the Russian military will ultimately play the decisive role. The political loyalties and ideological orientation of this institution remain ambiguous, however. Officers have publicly expressed their disappointment with the government's handling of demobilization and the conversion of defense industries to civilian production. Less publicly, they have also criticized Defense Minister Pavel Grachev for not defending the military's interests inside the government. Renegade regional commanders such as General Aleksandr Lebed in Moldova expose the weakness of the Defense Ministry's control over the army by defying Moscow and winning. Nonetheless, translation of this

discontent and disarray into support for a putsch seems unlikely since the military's most recent involvement in domestic politics, in October 1993, proved tragic for all concerned.

MIDSTREAM IN RUSSIA

Compared to the tumultuous previous three years, 1994 has proved a relatively stable period for post-Communist politics in Russia. The adoption of a new constitution has helped formalize the division of power between the different branches of government. Similarly, despite—or perhaps as a result of—its limited mandate, the new Russian parliament has been more effective than originally expected. Under Chernomyrdin's direction, Russia's post-December government has been more successful at implementing Gaidar's reform program than Gaidar himself was.

But focusing exclusively on these short-term stabilizing tendencies serves to obfuscate many structural problems in society that remain unresolved. Russia is still midway into one of the greatest social, economic, and political transformations ever undertaken. As these revolutionary changes continue, the discontent that accompanies the reorganization of any society will continue for years if not decades. Under these circumstances common-denominator ideologies such as nationalism and imperialism can quickly mobilize forces outside the state that are disenchanted with both the Communist past and the democratic present. Calm in the Kremlin does not necessarily signal the end of turmoil in society. ■

"[T]he application of instant remedies to the problems of an economy can misfire, as it did in Russia in 1992," says Padma Desai. In her view, the shock therapists made many naive assumptions, both economic and political; the current gradualist approach, she believes, is more realistic.

Aftershock in Russia's Economy

BY PADMA DESAI

Shock therapy for reforming economies has aroused enormous interest and controversy as a prescription that promises a quick cure: if the mind is chaotic, set it right with a shock; if the tooth hurts, pull it out; if the chasm is deep, try crossing it in a single leap rather than building a bridge.

But the application of instant remedies to the problems of an economy can misfire, as it did in Russia in 1992. The economy was plagued throughout 1993 by the high inflation shock therapy was intended to do away with. In the December 1993 parliamentary elections voters rejected Russia's Choice, the party championing radical economic reform led by Yegor Gaidar, the architect of shock therapy in Russia. Gaidar himself was out as economics minister and first deputy prime minister the next month. Soon thereafter the new government of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin adopted a gradualist program to deal with the economic crisis. *Shokovaya terapiya* has, however, survived as a permanent phrase in the Russian lexicon and an enduring problem for millions of destitute citizens.

In the meantime debate has continued on the appropriate policy framework for Russian economic reforms and the prospects for success, revolving around several specific questions: What indeed is shock

therapy, and was it really tried in Russia? If so, why did it fail? What were its consequences? Where is the current reform heading?

WHAT IS SHOCK THERAPY?

The agenda for shock therapy has three critical components: first, extreme inflation in the economy must be flushed out by an abrupt tightening of the money supply (by slashing government borrowing from the central bank); second, the currency must be pegged (to the dollar or some other currency) early in the process; and finally, substantial foreign aid must be available in support of the stabilization effort.

In contrast, gradualists propose firm but gradual, and escalating, attacks on the budget deficit and inflation, supported by smaller and more realistic aid flows and without recourse to an early pegging of the exchange rate.¹ Both programs advocate price decontrol and privatization of state-owned assets.

Policymakers agree on the need to curb hyperinflation (price rises of 50 percent or more a month) through a swift attack on the printing of currency that fuels it. Government spending on defense, on subsidies to consumers, and on ailing farms and factories must be slashed right away. But if inflation is running below such extreme levels, the question of the rate at which it should be rolled back by reducing government outlays becomes relevant, since the more drastic the reduction, the higher the human costs of worker layoffs, subsidy cutbacks, and decline in living standards.

Foreign aid in large amounts can ease this pain by providing support to the budget, helping finance safety net provisions for poor people, unemployment compensation, and retraining for the jobless, whose numbers swell as unprofitable units are closed.

But where is the advantage of pegging the currency? It should also be made convertible for trading activity so exporters can convert their rubles into dollars at the fixed rate and importers can get the dollars they need

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¹The description of shock therapy is from Jeffrey Sachs, "Russia's Struggle with Stabilization: Conceptual Issues and Evidence" (Paper presented at the Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics, Washington, D.C., April 28-29, 1994), p. 1. Details of the gradualist approach are in Padma Desai, "Ease Up on Russia," *New York Times*, op-ed, December 10, 1993, p. A35; and "A Cure for Russia's Ills that Is Marred by Errors of Analysis," letter to the editor, *Financial Times*, April 6, 1994, p. 14.

for purchases in exchange for rubles. If the incentives of market prices are to work (following price decontrol at home), a Russian buyer should be able to import cheaper products from abroad and a Russian exporter should be able to compete effectively in foreign markets: a convertible currency thus helps bring in correct relative prices and effective competition from abroad in the traded items. These competitive pressures would create a chain reaction in the domestic economy adjusting in response to price decontrol. While these adjustments are taking place, the fixed exchange rate is supported by a stabilization fund.

But there is a fly in the therapeutic ointment. Prices would rise suddenly and steeply from levels set under the command economy and then stabilize if monetary control and fiscal discipline continued to prevail. If higher prices lead to demands for higher wages and those brakes are not applied, however, the economy can spiral into hyperinflation; on the other hand, if financial and budgetary discipline holds under these circumstances, there can be massive unemployment.

By contrast, gradualism's advocacy of measured but decisive control of inflation is based on a sensible assessment of domestic political acceptability and outside help in support of the program. Factory closures and a rise in unemployment stretch over a longer period. The exchange rate is allowed to fluctuate (as currently in Russia), and settles down to a realistic level as the economy stabilizes.

Was shock therapy tried in Russia? Opinions differ. Former Finance Minister Boris Fyodorov answers with a resounding *nyet*: "Many people in the West, it seems, prefer to close their eyes to the fact that there never was any shock therapy, ever, in Russia." A leading protagonist of such therapy, Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs, concurs: "Contrary to recent commentary, 'shock therapy' did not fail in Russia. It was never tried."²

I will argue here that the Gaidar program was shock therapy vintage in its design and in its consequences until the fall of 1992.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE FACT

The shock prescription of an abrupt cutback in the government budget deficit was applied lock, stock, and barrel by Gaidar when he launched market reforms in January 1992, just after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Thus the federal deficit for the first quarter of 1992 was to be reduced to zero from an official estimate for 1991 of 17 percent of gross domestic product (21 percent according to the International Monetary Fund). Defense outlays, state-financed investments, and subsidies to consumers and industry were slashed. These cuts were Soviet-style: they did not come out of consultations with the parliament or the people. Local governments were told to find their own resources if they wanted to subsidize citizens' purchases of basic foodstuffs and services. Indexation linking the earnings of state employees and pensioners to the cost of living was scrapped. Prices were almost wholly decontrolled.

Prices jumped by 300 percent that January. People saw the worth of their cash savings take a sudden dive. The loss of indexation added to state workers' insecurity. There were also fears of large-scale unemployment from the proposed stoppage of budgetary support to industry. The social safety net, in the form of unemployment insurance, was still far from adequate.

How severe did the shock turn out to be? How long did it last?

The answer can be found in the sharp decline in the rate of inflation stretching beyond the summer of 1992. The abrupt squeeze on government borrowing from the central bank produced the expected inflation control, bringing monthly price rises down in August 1992 to 9 percent—which turned out to be the lowest level in 1992 and 1993.³ Why did the performance fail to continue beyond fall 1992?

WHERE IT WENT WRONG: ECONOMICS

The reasons for shock therapy's failure were both economic and political. The macroeconomic stabilization did not endure because the microeconomic units—the farms and the factories—did not respond to price signals according to market economy norms. The Gaidar program naively assumed that in response to the new relative price regime, managers would lay off workers in unprofitable factories and the workers would move on to profit-making units; that the managers, like their counterparts in market economies, would choose to make ends meet, and failing that, would declare bankruptcy rather than seek financial support from the government budget as before.

This textbook response did not materialize because the problems faced by a Russian factory manager in the military and heavy industries were formidable—as they still are, almost three years later. A great deal of production has to switch from heavy machinery, military items, and unwanted materials to consumer goods—requiring many decisions on which product lines to initiate, machines to retool, and new technologies to adopt.

Should the nuclear submarine factory in Severodvinsk start producing oil and gas drilling platforms or commercial tankers, barges, and tugboats? Should the

²Boris Fyodorov, "Moscow without Mirrors," *New York Times*, op-ed, April 1, 1994, p. A35; and Jeffrey Sachs, "Betrayal," *The New Republic*, January 31, 1994, p. 19.

³In fact, Sachs in the previously cited article marshals the evidence in support of financial stabilization to argue that the IMF did not come up with the necessary help (to be augmented by the Group of 7 countries) in time even though the Gaidar plan had achieved "temporary stabilization" by drastically scaling back the budget deficit.

submarine manufacturer in Nizhni Novgorod convert to domestic kettles and irons? The challenges of this unprecedented "creative destruction" go beyond the normal decisions of a corporate manager in a market economy.

And who among the highly trained technicians should be handed the pink slip? Personnel at Russian plants, from skilled engineers to unskilled laborers, live in housing provided by the factory. In the defense industry towns of Arzamas, Chelyabinsk, and Krasnoyarsk, where technicians service nuclear warheads and build rockets, cannons, tanks, and ships, orders have declined, but workers cannot be removed because they have nowhere to go. The long socialist tradition of paternalism toward workers reinforces managerial resistance to layoffs. As one Soviet-era factory manager said: "I have risen to the rank of a manager after 30 years in this factory. The workers are my family. When they have problems, they do not run to Yegor Gaidar and Boris Fyodorov, who threaten their livelihood. They come to me."

It is, therefore, unsurprising that macroeconomic stabilization failed later in 1992 because the hoped-for reaction of factory managers to price signals did not come about. Those running Russia's industries were simply not ready to risk factory closures and substantial layoffs.

WHERE IT WENT WRONG: POLITICS

Management's rejection of radical economic reform found ready acceptance in the Supreme Soviet. It raised opposition among centrists there and particularly among the Communists, who regarded the program as an ideological attack on the planned system. Economically unworkable, shock therapy turned out to be politically unacceptable.

Shock therapists rule out the need for political consensus that characterizes "hesitant democratization." Rather, the recommended strategy entails outwitting the old guard by identifying a political window of opportunity and launching tough reforms right away. Evidently such windows opened up in Poland in 1989 after liberation from the Soviet empire and in Russia in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Thus Anders Åslund writes that "the paramount task of the new noncommunist leadership must be to build a new state as simply and fast as possible. There is neither opportunity or skill nor time for any sophistication."⁴ Speed, toughness, and timing mark the Sachs agenda as well. In Sachs's view, a handful of Russian reformers in the finance ministry and the central bank

could launch the "big bang" because the president was popular and the populace acquiescent at the start of 1992—an assumption that subsequent opposition showed was a mistake. In particular, the macroeconomic stabilization could not be sustained after fall 1992 because escalating political opposition ruled out monetary control and fiscal discipline. The program also floundered because it assumed massive foreign assistance that it failed to procure. The mounting political turmoil that followed the launching of shock therapy operated at three levels. The fast-paced program led to increasing polarization in 1992 and 1993 between the executive and legislative branches of the central government and between Moscow and the 88 territorial units of the Russian Federation. Last year also witnessed the exit and entry of cabinet ministers, with President Boris Yeltsin orchestrating an apparent centrist balance between reformers and conservatives in the government.

The Executive Branch vs. the Legislative Branch

The legislators elected to the old Russian parliament in 1990 were a mixed bag of reforming democrats, ardent Communists, and a fringe of diehard nationalists and extreme (Soviet) unionists ready to go beyond the war of words to resurrect old times. The membership was one-third reformist and one-third antireform extremists (including the Communists), and the remaining element, known as *boloto*, or marsh, moved in either direction.

The January 1992 shock brought out a variety of voices. But increasingly, proreform centrists, who were against the program's swift pace, joined ranks with the old faithfuls who saw it as designed to accomplish the political goal of destroying the Communist planned system. By August 1992 the Supreme Soviet had forced the government to bail out bankrupt factories. By September 1993 it was ready to push the (1993) budget deficit to 25 percent of GDP. The escalation culminated with the dissolution of parliament, the attack on the parliament building in Moscow, and the December elections.

The Center vs. the Periphery

Friction between the central government and Russia's regions and municipalities was brought out into the open over time by the hasty fiscal measures of early 1992. In the grand swoop designed to roll back the federal deficit, a number of items were summarily taken out of the budget and passed on to lower levels without a proper agreement on the principles of financial rearrangements between the center and the regions.

In the Soviet era the regions had been responsible for education, health care, culture, housing, local road building, and the like, but they received the necessary funds from the center. In 1992 federal programs such

⁴Details are in Anders Åslund, "The Importance of Democracy for the Economic Transformation of Post-Communist Countries" (Paper presented at the *Journal of Democracy* conference on "Economic Reform and Democracy," Washington, D.C., May 5–6, 1994), p. 4.

as capital investments in rural areas, subsidies for livestock products, and development of local passenger transport were shifted to the regions without matching finances. The ad hoc nature of the rearrangement continued into last year: the 1993 budget initially proposed that the regions keep between 5 percent and 50 per cent of value-added taxes, with the minimum to be kept by the *highest* contributors. The center would then redistribute the tax revenue as it saw fit.

Other forces, such as ethnic identity, were pulling the regions away from Moscow, but the center's perceived fiscal arm-twisting of resource-rich areas was increasingly pushing the "primeval Russian lands" into demands for economic autonomy. The center capitulated to the more vociferous claimants, further weakening the tenuous fiscal arrangements. By last fall almost 30 of the 88 components of the Russian Federation had unilaterally cut back their tax contributions to Moscow.

The Polarization in the Cabinet

Throughout 1993 Yeltsin had to contend with two opposing pressures: he had to have a radical finance minister to control inflation, so that the International Monetary Fund would release its promised aid; and he also, to pacify parliament, had to have a conservative component in the cabinet, arguing for a production boost via industrial subsidies. By September he faced defeat on both counts. Parliament voted to triple the budget deficit (from the original 8 trillion rubles) and the IMF refused to release the second tranche of a promised \$3 billion in funding. At the same time, the divisions in the cabinet were laid out by radical ministers on national television and by the Western media, bringing the discussion down to its lowest level. All this made Western policymakers and international business wonder whether there was a functioning government in Russia.

The "consequences of the consequences"—to borrow a phrase from Pasternak—were the results of the December 1993 elections.

Gaidar's reformist party, Russia's Choice, received only 15 percent of the ballots cast, signaling Russian voters' rejection of radical reform. With the vote for the other mildly reformist parties added, the proreform total came to 34 percent. By contrast, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party captured the largest share of the vote, with 23 percent. The three hard-line parties together took 43 percent.

In short, the composition of the new parliament dictated the adoption of a gradual transition, implying a firm rather than an abrupt reining in of inflation and an avoidance of extreme financial stabilization measures that could once again bring in polarization between the government and lawmakers. The new government has so far demonstrated a willingness to work with the new parliament, in contrast with the

days when shock therapists summarily announced their program without political dialogue and persuasion. Parliament in June adopted the government's budget proposal.

With the departure of Gaidar and Fyodorov, the Chernomyrdin cabinet is more cohesive. The prime minister, unlike the reforming "technocrats," is a "manager" who can likely make the necessary reforms palatable. Finally, several regions, parliamentary factions, and industry groups signed a civil accord in April pledging to help prevent violence and resolve differences within the bounds of the constitution. These developments mark a step—if a shaky one—in the direction of national consensus.

AID FOR THE GIANT

While Russian politics seems to have settled down into a give-and-take mode within and between the various branches and levels of government, the affluent industrial democracies of the Group of Seven have also moved to a realistic and positive involvement with the reform process. The G-7 aid strategy of converting Russia into a benign democracy and functioning market economy is to be marked by continuous engagement with the reforming agenda of the new government and full awareness that there will be ups and downs over the long haul. But massive aid flows, as demanded by Sachs and said by him to be necessary for shock therapy's success, are ruled out as unrealistic. Megabucks for Russia will not be forthcoming in the foreseeable future, with the competing calls for funds for domestic uses in the cash-strapped G-7 countries; only steadily expanding successes, carefully nurtured and seen to be politically credible, can overcome the widespread skepticism that Russia can productively absorb very large aid inflows.

But smaller commitments tailored to the unfolding gradualist program are another matter. The IMF's approval in May of the second tranche of \$1.5 billion for Russia signaled support for the government's plan, which anticipates inflation of between 5 percent and 7 percent a month by the end of the year and a 1994 budget deficit target not exceeding 10 percent of GNP. (This target is close to the actual 1993 deficit; by contrast, the IMF had insisted in 1992 that Russia pare its budget deficit to 5 percent of GDP.)

The inflation rate for June of 5 percent marks a steady drop in prices in the first half of the current year. But industrial output continues to decline too. Before the economy begins an upturn, workers will have been laid off in huge numbers and bankrupt factories will have ceased to exist. Indeed, in the third year of its transition to an economy free of high inflation, Russia has entered the toughest phase to date. Whether it stays on track will depend on how the leadership manages the politics of the economic agenda. ■

The successful extremist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky "is not about substance but about style. And indeed he has one, as ancient as medieval carnival jesters and as modern as performance art. His style is national and therefore easily recognizable. . . . So far [it] works."

Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the Unholy Fool

BY MARK YOFFE

With his unexpected triumph in Russian parliamentary elections last December, Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovsky, the leader of the victorious Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), suddenly attained a pinnacle of notoriety. Outside Russia, Zhirinovsky is still known largely for his buffoonish antics and semiabsurd extremist statements. Comparisons of Zhirinovsky and his party with Adolf Hitler and German National Socialism made the image even more repulsive, and have often led to outright dismissal of the Zhirinovsky phenomenon. But an examination of the man's writings and speeches, along with those of his political entourage, may shed light on his and his party's views and platform and help explain his mysterious appeal among Russians.

First, Zhirinovsky's thinking does not necessarily correspond fully to that of other high officials and ideologues of the Liberal Democratic Party. The party's elders espouse a motley collection of nationalist and extremist ideas ranging from the absurd to the quite reasonable. They include the romantic nationalism of Sergei Zharikov, the former "minister of culture and youth affairs" in Zhirinovsky's shadow government; the romantic extremism of writer Eduard Limonov, a former "minister of security"; and the utterly racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, expansionist views of other "cabinet" members and ideologues.

Even on anti-Semitism there is no unity among the party leader's entourage, or even clarity in Zhirinovsky's own mind. Zhirinovsky himself has never openly displayed an outright hostility toward Jews; he can be said to be somewhat negative, but not more than that. At times he is even eager to liken Russian Jews who emigrated to the West, of whose successes in the new life he is proud—as he says in his political autobiography, *The Last Thrust South*—with ethnic Russians. This is anathema to any "real" Russian nationalist Jew-hater of the type found among the members of the Pamyat

(Memory) movement, for whom "Russian" can under no circumstances mean being Jewish.

The ambiguity of Zhirinovsky's personal attitude toward Jews is underlined by the fact that he has never made up his mind about his own origins. For a long time he has refused to acknowledge that his father was a Jew, saying instead that he was a lawyer or that he came from a "multinational family." But in a recent interview with the Israeli newspaper *Maariv*, he apparently admitted his father's Jewishness, saying he had never denied it and is proud of his father.

In his autobiography, Zhirinovsky's stress on the fact that he comes from a "multinational" family—"The husbands of some of [my] cousins were not Russian. My aunt's husband was Mordovian. . . . Cousin's husband was Ossetian or Adygeian"—a family he characterizes as a "typical average Russian family," together with the mystery with which he likes to surround his father's nationality, points in the direction of an important conclusion regarding his nationalist views. A detailed analysis of his writings shows that Zhirinovsky's use of the word "Russian" is purely generic. It serves as a substitute for the term "Soviet," and carries the same historical and ideological freight. For Zhirinovsky, all the people of the former Soviet Union, whether Georgians, Turkmen, Tatars, Moldovans, Ukrainians, Kyrgyz, or even Jews, are—Russians. Russia he thinks of not as a nation but as an empire. Geographically, his Russia is fully equated with the Soviet Union. Therefore, Zhirinovsky cannot be viewed as a true Russian nationalist, but is seen to be a Russian (Soviet-style) imperialist and expansionist.

Nowhere in his writings does Zhirinovsky embrace any conception of Russia and Orthodoxy as mystically entwined to form an almost mythological entity; he lacks a sentimental tragic fondness for Russia, or any inherited predisposition to understand the essence of Russia—to hear the "voice of Russian blood" so clearly audible to Russian nationalists such as the "village" writers Vasily Belov and Valentin Rasputin, the theoretician of Russian revivalism Igor Shafarevich, or his own former "minister of culture," punk rocker Zhari-

MARK YOFFE, a consultant to the European division of the Library of Congress, has written widely on Russian culture and Soviet counterculture.

kov. Lacking deep emotion for Russia as well as an understanding of the “Russian idea,” Zhirinovsky speaks of his future Russia as a homeland of many happily coexisting people, “where Russia will gain its national self-perception together with an international one, and not to elevate Russians and to lower the other peoples, but to elevate Russians and to elevate all who live next to them, on all this Eurasian continent from Brest to Kabul, from Yamal to Stambul.” And by “Russians,” he goes on to say, he means “all who speak and think in Russian.” All this hardly qualifies Zhirinovsky as a nationalist, but rather, makes him an internationalist, paradoxical as it sounds. This explains the constant tension between Zhirinovsky and the true nationalist movements in Russia, such as Pamyat.

GO SOUTH, YOUNG MAN

Zhirinovsky’s geopolitical agenda grows naturally out from his imperialist ideas and is essentially very simple, though complicated by the many attitudes he has developed regarding different countries. His doctrine is built on one concept: the Last Thrust South. In Zhirinovsky’s view of Russian history, all bad things, all plagues, wars, and invasions, come from the south—“the south” being for him a vague entity comprising Transcaucasia, Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkey—Turkey being the greatest evil. This entire region, according to Zhirinovsky, is being consumed in a fire of tribal and interethnic warfare, endangering and impoverishing its northern neighbor, Russia. To achieve lasting peace on the Eurasian continent, these restless southern nations must be pacified and incorporated into a friendly empire, whose name will be Russia.

To extend the benefits all over the globe, Zhirinovsky suggests that the United States, western Europe, China, and Japan follow the Russian example and make their own thrust south—with the United States grabbing Central and South America, Europe conquering Africa, and Japan and China taking the lands south of them under their total control. Thus the spheres of influence will run from north to south and will never overlap, which will lead to peace between major players and prosperity for them as well as for those who fall under their domination. All this will take place in an atmosphere of the broadest possible pluralism, tolerance, and respect for the culture and human dignity of the smallest existing ethnic groups—some of which, of course, will have to be “pacified” a bit first. This will also be good for the environment, since airplanes will have no need to crisscross the globe but will fly mostly from north to south and back, resulting in less pollution and disruption of nature.

This scheme is complicated by Zhirinovsky’s unfriendly attitude toward some countries, which is where the ambiguities begin. If he is clearly negative about Turkey, then his sentiments toward Japan and Germany are less certain. Zhirinovsky made memo-

rable postelection promises to turn Germany into Chernobyl and Japan into a combined Hiroshima-Nagasaki for their arrogance toward the Russians. But at the same time he is proud of the favor in which he is held by certain German right-wing personalities. And he envisions for both Germany and Japan a central role in his utopia: Germany, for instance, will remain one of the major territorial units in Europe after the final division.

ATTRACTING THE YOUNG

Zhirinovsky and the LDP’s success in the December elections for the new parliament—winning 22.8 percent of the total vote—can be attributed to two main factors: first, Zhirinovsky ensured the support of Russian youth, and second, he created for himself a very clever public persona.

Of the many parties on the ballot, Zhirinovsky’s was the only one to make any substantial effort to attract younger voters. The LDP created and touted a separate agenda for issues of concern to youth. From the very beginning, Zhirinovsky’s shadow cabinet, unlike that of any other party, had a “minister of culture and youth affairs.” And the post was occupied not by some old Komsomol hack but by the charismatic Sergei Zharikov, known to the majority of Russian youth not as a politician but as one of the country’s most celebrated rock personalities.

Zharikov was the lead singer, lyricist, and drummer of the Moscow punk rock band DK, famous for its uncompromising anti-Soviet posture. A hero of the countercultural underground resistance during the period, Zharikov managed to combine the seemingly uncombinable in his creative career—playing rock music and being an active member of the ultranationalist Pamyat movement. With his indisputable revolutionary credentials and musical talent, his erudition and his complex aesthetic, philosophical, and political views expressed in his numerous essays, Zharikov has a sure grip on the admiration of both blue-collar and intellectual youth. And while he officially left the shadow cabinet in February 1993, though remaining an LDP consultant on youth affairs, he single-handedly legitimized Zhirinovsky’s party in the eyes of thousands of young people. Zharikov’s influence is evident in Zhirinovsky’s musical tastes—the party leader claims to like rock, naming as his favorite bands Corrosion of Metal (Moscow’s foremost heavy metal group, incorporating absurdist and often obscene performance art into their act) and Civil Defense (the preeminent Russian punk rock outfit).

THE FOOL OF GOD

Zhirinovsky’s public image is modeled not primarily after Hitler’s, as is often commented on both in Russia and the West—though the LDP leader has definitely borrowed certain purely visual antics from the Fuehrer.

Rather, his image is deeply rooted in the Russian conservative tradition, evoking the likes of Vasily Rosanov, a philosopher of the early twentieth century, and Archpriest Avvakum, a fiery seventeenth-century preacher and leader of the archconservative "Old Believers" religious movement.

The public persona Zhirinovskiy has created contains a large dose of Bakhtinian carnivalesque stylistics and the Russian holy fool (*yurodivye*). The fools of Christ, in Russian-Byzantine tradition, were street preachers known for their ability to say openly to any authority, even the czar and his ministers, any sort of truth—often in a very crude and insulting manner. Holy fools embrace self-humiliation and self-abasement, then get up from the dirt and present themselves to the world in their revealed spiritual beauty and power. The holy fool as social critic unmasks through his actions and writings those elements of reality that do not correspond to his idea of the ideal. To do this, he turns the world inside out—reality is made unreal and unreal things are presented as truth, and the most serious political and philosophical issues of the day are couched in obscenities and absurdities—all to shock the audience into enlightenment and mock opponents. In the Old Russian tradition of political polemic such approaches date back to Ivan the Terrible, who in his famous correspondence with the apostate prince Andrei Kurbsky makes use of the stylistics and rhetoric of the holy fools.

All these are pathological sadistic-humorous tendencies, akin in their essence to medieval carnivalesque torturing of the dethroned czar/clown. For Zhirinovskiy, the dethroned czar/clown is former Economics Minister Yegor Gaidar, the architect of Russian shock therapy; President Boris Yeltsin; or whoever else he perceives as his opposition. His attacks on his opponents and their constituencies are deliberately absurd. He does not really claim Alaska for Russia, but he needs the claim: it is part of his style, to say and do things so utterly absurd he can always disclaim them as a joke or eccentricity. But the claim, so frivolously open and straightforwardly irresponsible, resonates in many ways in the hearts of his audience.

Zhirinovskiy is a one-man performance piece, a happening, his role that of the colorful cretin who perpetually scandalizes and fascinates the crowd. The technique was successfully used for years by Zhirinovskiy's former "minister of security," Eduard Limonov, author of the novel *That's Me Eddie*, the most scandalous Russian book of the late twentieth century. Employing it, Limonov managed to stay in the spotlight for a long while, and has acquired a reputation as one of Russia's most notorious literary personalities—which has little to do with the quality of his prose. Zhirinovskiy has adopted Limonov's principle that any publicity is good publicity, and he persistently brings himself to the media's and the public's attention, steadily beefing up his notoriety.

Some Russians, especially young ones, say they voted for Zhirinovskiy and the LDP just for the heck of it. (This excludes those who did it as a protest against Yeltsin-Gaidar democrats, who fell out of favor with young voters, particularly those with leftist leanings, because of the government's antidemocratic and violent actions before and during the October suppression of the parliamentary mutiny.) They never imagined that Zhirinovskiy, whom they regarded as a joke, would do so well in the elections, and their shock was great when they learned that he and his party had won with their help.

SOVIET EVERYMAN

But one must never lose sight of the fact that Zhirinovskiy's image is more calculated and sophisticated than it appears. Zhirinovskiy has cultivated in his public persona what the Russian formalist critic Viktor Shklovsky has characterized as "kitchen realism." This style presumes a shameless disclosure of intimate details about oneself—in Zhirinovskiy's case, primarily in his autobiography. These are not necessarily sexual, but more often shamelessly frank descriptions of the psychological drama the leader lived through as an unhappy child in a big and not particularly close family, with a mother exhausted by hard, humiliating work. Zhirinovskiy was the smallest and the weakest, underfed, ugly, badly dressed, and often without shoes. His descriptions of his daily life back then are full of foul smells, cold, hunger, discomfort. This ugly duckling grows up to be an equally ugly gander—an educated *homo sovieticus*, a typical lumpenized Soviet professional, for whom years of emotional deprivation, without friends or serious feelings for his wife or son, left only one niche for self-fulfillment: politics.

This picture of a miserable, underpaid Soviet man suffering from poor living conditions and awful diet is instantly recognizable by millions of Zhirinovskiy's peers. Hence the appeal. In videos, Zhirinovskiy, displaying a hairy beer belly, drinks vodka and gesticulates exaggeratedly; elsewhere he speaks of himself as being rude with girls; and he has proven time and again that he can sling verbal abuse around and does not shy away from the occasional fistfight. He is like everyone else, and even better—he has an education, speaks (with deliberate carelessness) foreign languages, has traveled abroad, has political experience and a bunch of crazy ideas and no fear of the authorities or the West. But most of all—and this is particularly clear after a reading of his book—he is not about substance but about style. And indeed he has one, as ancient as medieval carnival jesters and as modern as performance art. His style is national and therefore easily recognizable—he is a runaway from the darkest depths of Russian history, or from the pages of Russian literature, a Dostoyevsky character incarnated. So far this style works. Zhirinovskiy for president in 1996? ■

"If the states of Asia and Africa after the withdrawal of the European colonial empires are any guide, then ethnic conflict in the former Soviet Union is likely to be bitter, violent, and protracted."

Nationalism and the Legacy of Empire

BY MARK N. KATZ

The breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the disintegration of the last great European colonial empire. Just as when the European powers withdrew from their colonies, the 15 former Soviet republics, now all independent countries, are experiencing a host of problems: economic dislocation, weak political structures, ethnic tension, and even warfare.

Although not the sole source of these woes, a significant contributing factor is the emergence of nationalism. Nationalism, of course, is not necessarily destructive; indeed, it is something that occurs in virtually all nations and can be a unifying force within them. But just as happened in many third world countries when they gained independence, an often vengeful form of nationalism has developed in the former republics. Some brands are expansionist—especially in Russia. And while the nationalisms of most non-Russian republics are not expansionist, they tend at a minimum to be centered around a specific ethnic group and to exclude those outside it.

Some observers are convinced that especially virulent forms of nationalism are inherently temporary. While home to a highly defensive nationalism at first, it is argued, new nations gradually acquire the experience and self-confidence that allow them to put aside nationalist policies recognized as counterproductive.¹ The many third world states that used to ban or severely restrict Western investment in the domestic economy but now actively seek it provide examples of this.

Many observers see democratization as a leading means by which extreme nationalism is ameliorated. The theory is that democracies do not go to war with

each other or engage in civil wars because they resolve their conflicts through peaceful methods. That most of the former Soviet republics have either embarked on the path toward democratization or at least stated their intention to do so, appears to offer the hope that extreme varieties of nationalism might be tempered by democratic institutions offering alternative channels for conflict resolution.

Perhaps ethnically exclusive nationalisms in the post-Soviet states will recede as a result of democratization, economic development, or other positive factors, but it is highly doubtful this will occur anytime soon. For there exists in the former Soviet Union, as in many parts of the third world, a problem that serves to heighten insecurity, and thus to enhance extreme nationalism: that the existing borders were drawn by the imperial power not to reflect actual ethnic and national differences, but for its own convenience.

It is not clear whether or to what extent the newly opened Soviet archives will demonstrate that Moscow deliberately drew and redrew contentious borders among neighboring nationalities so they would look to Moscow for protection against one another. But whatever the intentions behind them, the artificial boundaries exacerbated relations among ethnic groups. The union republics often contained two or more nationalities that had historically had poor relations. Nor were borders drawn to include a single ethnic group entirely within them; large segments of a nationality were often divided among two or more republics.

Nationalism in what was once the Soviet Union is not, of course, a homogenous phenomenon, and its character and intensity vary not only across ethnic groups but also within them. But ethnic-based nationalist movements have sprung up throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union. They seek territory, political independence or autonomy, advancement for their group, or other ends—often at the expense of other peoples. In many of the new countries, nationalism in general and territorial disputes in particular are seized on by Communist-turned-nationalist regimes to justify their authoritarian rule. And the passing of

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¹This argument was forcefully made in Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

empire means there is no longer a central authority to regulate relations among the various nations.

A TALE OF TWO TERRITORIES

The former Soviet Union offers several major examples of nationalists in neighboring states claiming the same territory. A land dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan kindled a war between the two republics that began almost four years before they became independent. The conflict centers on the question of whether Nagorno-Karabakh, a region the Soviet authorities had assigned to Azerbaijan despite its predominantly Armenian population and its proximity to Armenia, should belong to Azerbaijan or Armenia. It cannot be said with any degree of certainty that if Moscow had, in the 1920s, assigned Nagorno-Karabakh and the tiny sliver of territory between it and Armenia to the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic that the current conflict could have been avoided. But it is clear that the Soviet-engineered borders stirred up both Armenian and Azeri nationalists such that each side believes absolutely vital interests are at stake. Neither government has been willing to compromise, though the war has devastated their economies, aggravated Armenia's relations with neighboring Turkey, and led to political turmoil in Azerbaijan. Compromise would be political suicide, since public opinion in both nations has adopted an extremist nationalist position. It is highly doubtful that greater democratization in either country would alter the situation, at least at present.

The Crimean peninsula is another hotly disputed territory. An independent Muslim khanate, the Crimea was conquered by Russia in the eighteenth century. After the Bolshevik Revolution it was part of the Russian republic until 1954, when Khrushchev transferred it to Ukraine as a gift. When Ukraine became independent in 1991, Russian nationalists insisted the peninsula should be returned to Russia. Shortly before it was abolished late last year, the Communist-dominated Russian parliament formally laid claim to Crimea. Although Russian President Boris Yeltsin has repudiated this claim, the conviction that Crimea should belong to Russia has strong support among the Russian public. Similarly, Ukrainians of every political hue are determined to retain Crimea, afraid that giving it up would be the first step in the dissolution of Ukraine.

There are other territorial disputes between former republics—such as the one over the Fergana Valley in Central Asia with its complicated Soviet-era borders—that have not as yet fully engaged nationalist passions but have the potential to flare up into similarly intransigent conflicts.

A LAND OF THEIR OWN

When the Soviet Union broke up it was only the 15 so-called union republics that became independent. But living in the territory of the former empire were a host of ethnic groups besides those that had a union republic named for them. Many areas in which such usually smaller groups predominated (or had once predominated) Moscow had demarcated as “autonomous republics” or “autonomous regions” within the union republic, or had allowed other special political arrangements. Many of these ethnic groups have also asserted their desire for independence. The distinction between a union republic and an autonomous republic may have seemed clear to the Soviet inventors of the concepts, but it was never clear to the inhabitants of the latter, some of which have larger populations than the now independent union republics.

Inside Russia, one autonomous republic—Chechnya—has declared itself independent. Although Yeltsin has refused to recognize its independence, he has been unable to prevent the governments of the autonomous republics and other political divisions from increasing their authority at Moscow's expense.

And Russia is not alone: several of the other newly independent states also have one or more regions where smaller ethnic groups are demanding independence. Georgia is facing secessionist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Gagauz people and the “Transnistrian Republic” have demanded independence from Moldova. In Central Asia, there are secessionist movements in northern Kazakhstan, and eastern Tajikistan, among other places. In the Crimea there is a strong movement that favors secession from Ukraine.

It is ironic that the union republics asserted their right to secede from the Soviet Union but, once independent, have refused to recognize any region's right to secede from them. They often forbid referendums on independence in regions where secessionist movements are active, or if they do permit polling, balk at accepting the results as legitimate when the majority chooses secession. In new countries with undemocratic regimes, governments are unwilling to allow one or more regions to determine their own future democratically, since this would raise demands for democracy throughout the republic.

Nor is this a problem that can readily be resolved through land reallocation. Under the Soviet Union, Moscow's power was not diminished by transferring territory from one republic to another. For the governments of the newly independent countries, on the other hand, relinquishing any territory voluntarily is almost unthinkable, since it might precipitate a nationalist backlash and ousting at the next election—or possibly sooner, by undemocratic means. This political reality hardens government attitudes toward actual, and even potential, secessionist movements. This stance

does not encourage minority groups to integrate into the larger nation, but instead may inflame their desire to secede.

AUTHORITARIAN DREAM, DEMOCRATIC NIGHTMARE?

Authoritarian governments can exploit nationalist sentiment with regard to territorial disputes and secessionist demands to justify authoritarian measures against perceived insurgencies. But once fanned by leaders, nationalism among the populace can also trap a regime into pursuing uncompromising policies toward such challenges for fear of being overthrown if it backs down. A hard line can lead to war, or to an escalation in ongoing fighting. And if the government loses on the battlefield, it may be ousted for that.

In most of the post-Soviet states the government has remained partly or completely under the control of the former Communists, whose primary goal—unsurprisingly—is to remain in power. Communism no longer being a particularly popular ideology, most Communists who retain power have changed their name and claim to be adherents of democracy. Many of course are not democratic, and even those who have democratic tendencies do not wish to be voted out of office. But nationalism is a popular ideology the former can usually capitalize on, especially where there is a territorial dispute with a neighbor or an attempt at secession to raise the nationalist passions.

For more democratically oriented Communists, a nationalist position on territorial/secessionist/ethnic conflicts can serve to bolster domestic support, at least within the majority ethnic group. For leaders less democratically minded, such conflicts can provide a useful excuse for continuing authoritarian rule. In Kazakhstan, for example, where the ethnic Russian and ethnic Kazakh populations are almost equal, many believe that full-fledged democratization would lead to the emergence of Kazakh and Russian nationalist parties, whose fear and suspicion of each other might lead to civil war. Continued rule by the authoritarian but relatively benevolent regime of President Nursultan Nazarbayev is seen as preferable to this by many Russians and Kazakhs.

Exploitation of nationalist sentiment not only helps former Communists remain in power but can also work to restore ousted Communists. Heydar Aliyev, the former Communist Party boss of Azerbaijan whom Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev dismissed in 1987, regained power last year mainly due to the collapse of authority the democratically elected president, Abulfaz Elchibey, suffered as a result of his government's inability to halt Armenian advances in the war over Nagorno-Karabakh.

But when leaders of any stripe exploit nationalist sentiment they risk creating conditions that impede the progress of compromise settlements. In September

1993, for example, the outline of an agreement between Russia and Ukraine was announced, under which Ukraine would relinquish its claims to the disputed Black Sea Fleet in return for forgiveness of some of its mounting debt to Moscow for Russian oil. Ukrainian nationalists protested that giving up the fleet would weaken Ukraine's claim to the Crimean peninsula, where the fleet is based. Nationalist opposition was so intense that Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk had to repudiate the agreement almost immediately. Finally, the failure of Eduard Shevardnadze, the restored former Communist boss of Georgia, to force breakaway Abkhazia back into the fold in September 1993 caused a rapid upsurge in the rebellion against his rule led by the elected but deposed anti-Communist leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

RESTIVE RUSSIANS

The presence—and in some cases the actions—of large Russian communities in several of the non-Russian former republics have also stirred up nationalist tensions. There are approximately 25 million Russians living outside Russia in the territory of the former Soviet Union. During the Soviet era these Russians enjoyed the highest status in the non-Russian republics, holding most of the top positions in industry, government, the military, and education. Official business was conducted in Russian, not the local language. As a result, non-Russians often viewed Russians in their republics as colonial occupiers. At independence, or even before it, the non-Russians sought to end Russian dominance in their republics. Most of the new countries have deposed Russian as the language of official business in favor of the native tongue. Non-Russians have also sought to remove Russians from their leadership positions.

The position of the Russians in the other post-Soviet states resembles that of the European colonists living in the third world when countries there became independent. In many cases the Europeans emigrated en masse back to Europe, either because the new government drove them out, because they feared nationalist policies or sentiment would make life uncomfortable for them, or because, while the new government wanted Europeans to remain, they knew they would no longer have nearly as much decision-making power.

For those returning to Britain, France, Portugal, or elsewhere in Europe, the transition was often very difficult. They had to find places for themselves in societies experiencing economic difficulties. But at least there was a well-established capitalist economy for them to integrate into. Russians emigrating from the non-Russian former republics face a Russian economy in complete disarray, and their prospects for finding jobs or even housing back in Russia are extremely bleak.

Unsurprisingly, most Russians do not want to return. On the other hand, neither do they want to adjust to the reality of the new countries' independence. They do not want to give up their high-status jobs. They do not want to learn the local languages. And in some cases they have shown signs of being unwilling to accept minority status. The predominantly Russian population on the east bank of the Dniester River, for example, has announced its secession from Moldova and the formation of what it calls the Transdnistrian Republic. In both the Donbas mining region of eastern Ukraine and in northern Kazakhstan, where Russians make up a large proportion of the population, there are movements to secede and join the adjacent Russian Federation. A similar movement has sprung up among the predominantly Russian population of northeastern Estonia in reaction to the Estonian law granting citizenship only to ethnic Estonians and those "others" (primarily Russians) who pass a proficiency examination in the Estonian language—something most Russians in Estonia are not capable of doing.

The ethnically exclusivist elements in the nationalisms of the newly independent non-Russian states on the one hand and their Russian communities on the other are mutually reinforcing. The assertion of non-Russian nationalism is highly threatening to the Russians living in the areas bordering Russia—the so-called near abroad—especially since returning to Russia would mean destitution for most of them. But the Russians' response—asserting Russian nationalism, especially in the form of secessionist movements—is threatening to non-Russians, who see the prospect of Russian secessionism as not only weakening their new states by detaching vital territory but as part of a larger Russian plan to reabsorb them altogether. Because each community sees concessions as potentially leading to the loss of independence or to expulsion, neither is willing to cooperate with the other.

BIG BROTHER'S RETURN

When the Western European powers withdrew from their colonies in the third world, they retained significant influence in some (notably the French in sub-Saharan Africa) and little or none in others. None of the former powers, however, attempted to rebuild their colonial empires after having given them up. Powerful forces in Russia, though, appear determined to do just this.

A potential alliance of Russia and the Russian communities in the near abroad looms as an additional threat to the non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union. Whereas the Russian expatriates may have little hope of seceding and making it stick, their capability is greatly enhanced with Russia's government or military forces behind them. For example, it is Russian army support for the Transdnistrian Republic that has

allowed the Russians living there to avoid being governed by the Moldovan government. Boris Yeltsin himself has threatened Estonia over the issue of Russians living in that republic.

Russia has intervened not just to support Russians abroad, but for other reasons as well. Russian troops, for example, have intervened in Tajikistan to restore an old-line Communist regime that had been ousted by a coalition of democratic and Islamic forces in 1992. Yet despite Russia's purported concern about the spread of "Islamic fundamentalism" in Tajikistan, Russian forces assisted a Muslim minority in driving Orthodox Christian Georgian forces from Abkhazia.

The governments of the non-Russian states have responded differently to Moscow's efforts to extend its influence. Estonia and Ukraine have unsuccessfully sought support from the West. The Georgian government finally joined the Commonwealth of Independent States last year after Russian forces expelled Georgia from Abkhazia, but Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze simultaneously denounced Russian "imperialism." The Lithuanian government adopted an accommodating attitude toward Russians in the country—it could afford to, since there are relatively few there compared to Latvia or Estonia. Armenia and Azerbaijan have both attempted to win Russian backing in their ongoing struggle with each other (though there are few Russians in either). The Central Asian nations have sought to accommodate Russian interests, but except for Kyrgyzstan, they are run by old-line Communists who fear their own people so much that they have turned to Russian forces to maintain them in power.

Whatever their government's response, non-Russian nationalists for the most part regard Russian actions with extreme alarm. Many are convinced that Russia intends to eliminate their countries' independence and reabsorb them, just as occurred with most of the non-Russian states that briefly asserted their independence at the end of World War I and with the Baltic states in 1940. Indeed, non-Russian nationalists see Russia behind all the disputes their nations face, whether or not it actually is. They fear that Moscow is now taking advantage of the contentious Soviet-drawn borders in order to divide and conquer them once more. Those governments that have cooperated with Russia, such as the Shevardnadze regime in Georgia and the Aliyev regime in Azerbaijan, are often regarded as suspect or even traitorous by non-Russian nationalists—which undermines their legitimacy and hence their ability to remain in power.

LIVING WITH THE LEGACY

Although the Soviet Union no longer exists, the successor states have inherited a grim legacy of empire, including the intractable border disputes, a variety of secessionist movements, and the associated problems

discussed earlier that have given rise to ethnically exclusivist forms of nationalism in the non-Russian former republics and Russia itself. Nor is this negative nationalism likely to be gentled by democratization, at least in the near future. This kind of nationalism results in people, whether from the ethnic majority or a member of a minority nationality, identifying primarily with their ethnic group, and only secondarily—if at all—with other citizens of their country in a bond of common interest. Democracy under these circumstances may only serve to ratify the “tyranny of the majority.”

It is this prospect that makes minorities in the former Soviet republics unwilling to be part of the new countries they find themselves in, but rather prefer to secede and either join a neighboring state and benefit from the tyranny of the majority there, or form an independent state where they can exercise their own

tyranny of the majority. This means that the former republics are likely to have confrontational relations with minority groups within their borders and with each other, for a long time to come.

If the states of Asia and Africa after the withdrawal of the European colonial empires are any guide, then ethnic conflict in the former Soviet Union is likely to be bitter, violent, and protracted. The experience of other nations, though, does offer some hope. Real progress has been made recently toward resolving seemingly endless conflicts between blacks and whites in South Africa, between Jews and Palestinians in the Middle East, and between Eritrea and Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa. The good news is that progress is possible. The bad news is that it can take decades before any is made: the recent wave of nationalist conflict in the new states of the former Soviet Union is not likely to be short lived, but may last indefinitely. ■

"While history may end in some countries, it has not stopped in the Baltic states. Indeed, the Baltic search for security must be a continuous one precisely because its goal is not something that the Balts can achieve on their own: they will always remain dependent on what happens in both Moscow and the West even as they seek to deepen their independence."

The Baltics: Three States, Three Fates

BY PAUL A. GOBLE

Shortly after the August 1991 coup that brought them independence, the three Baltic governments decided that they should take down the statue of Lenin that had adorned their main squares in Soviet times. Naturally, each government decided to do it in its own way.

"In Lithuania, President Vytautas Landsbergis gave a passionate speech to a large audience before the parliament building, denouncing Lenin, Moscow, and the entire Communist era. Fired up by his remarks, the crowd ran to where Lenin was standing, found some rope and pulled Lenin down, smashing him in the street.

"In Latvia, the government also decided that Lenin had to go, but the Latvians did it their way. They formed a committee of their best engineering talent in order to determine just how large a crane and just how large a truck would be needed to lift Lenin off his pedestal and cart him off to the dump. That night, after the Riga rush hour, the engineers came with just the right size crane and just the right size truck and carried Lenin away.

"Meanwhile, in Estonia, the authorities also decided that Lenin had to go, but few in the government could remember just how big the statue of the Soviet leader actually was. After all, they had largely ignored it for years. Consequently, a group of officials walked down from the government offices on Toompea to where Lenin was standing, looked up, and were shocked at just how big the statue of the Soviet leader was. Shaking their heads, the officials returned to their offices and then did what any self-respecting Estonian would do: they picked up their cellular phones, called Helsinki and contracted with a Finnish firm to take Lenin down."

As in this Baltic anecdote and in their struggle for independence, the Baltic countries have adopted radically different strategies in their approach to national security. The Lithuanians have cast the issue in *moral* terms and, having won on the large questions with Russia, often have made concessions on other issues that undermined their initially impressive achievements. The Latvians have defined it in *legal* terms and sought to achieve security by enmeshing themselves and the Russians in a series of agreements that both sides will have a vested interest in observing. The Estonians have viewed it in *intellectual* terms, defining security broadly and thus seeking to reduce Russian influence in all aspects of Estonian life.

Prior to independence, these three approaches reinforced one another and thus contributed to the recovery of Baltic independence. Indeed, collectively, they defined the Baltic cause for many in the West. Now, however, these differences in strategy have become more critical and are likely to define the very different outcomes in each of the three.

PROBLEMS COMMON AND UNIQUE

The fundamental security problem confronting the Baltic states is that they cannot defend themselves and that no one will come to their defense. Both separately and collectively, they are too small to resist a Russian thrust against them—although as a matter of national honor and as a means to avoid the shame of 1940, each must try. Given their proximity to Russia, no one is going to come to their direct defense: NATO membership is probably precluded until NATO membership becomes meaningless following the entry of Russia, and even the so-called CNN "defense" available to some other small states is not available to them.

Instead, the Baltic countries must seek their security in three different directions. First, they must develop such intense relationships with the West that the cost to Moscow of any attack on them would be higher than the benefits. Moreover, they must recognize that their task is complicated by radical changes in the post-cold

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war environment: a shift from a bipolar world to one in which regional powers matter far more for Baltic security than the United States; a shift from political-ideological concerns to economic ones as the primary linkage in foreign policy calculations of the West; and a shift in the role of the Baltic states with the Russian Federation and the other post-Soviet successor states.

During the cold war, the Baltic states benefited from the West's nonrecognition policy, a policy that saw the status of the Baltic states as fundamentally different from any of the other Soviet republics. In one interesting way, this Baltic exceptionalism has continued into the post-Soviet era. Some Western policymakers have seen Russian treatment of the Baltic states as a litmus test of the broader relationship between Moscow and Western capitals, but others have used the West's supportive position toward the Baltic states as a cover for the West's retreat from the reassertion of Russian power everywhere else. As a result, many Baltic officials have assumed that they can count on a continuing special relationship, not recognizing that this continuity in Baltic exceptionalism will not last because of declining Western interest and that a revived Russian empire to the east will be more threatening to them, both directly and because of the likely calculations of the West down the road.

Second, the Baltic states must develop their security in ways that will not provoke Moscow. Russians feel that they have lost much of what they considered their patrimony; and while they have largely come to accept the independence of the Baltic states—in contrast to their feelings about Ukraine, Belarus, and the others—many of them still feel threatened by Baltic independence. Indeed, most of Moscow's criticism of the Balts is more a reflection of this Russian problem than of conditions on the ground.

And third, the Baltic states must recognize that Moscow's ability to undermine their security does not end with the departure of Russian troops. Indeed, Moscow may now have more levers—trade, corruption, and exploitation of ethnic Russian minorities—than it did before, and more incentive to use them. Moscow has already deployed the economic weapon, periodically blocking trade in key supplies, imposing punitive tariffs, and changing prices for energy and other commodities. But as Moscow is learning, this weapon can easily become a two-edged sword. While some have attempted to argue that Moscow's willingness to charge less than world prices to the former Soviet republics for its goods represents a kind of aid, it is in fact a means of controlling them. Once Moscow goes to world prices, non-Russian countries have much less incentive to buy lower quality Russian goods. A classic example: Moscow imposed world prices for energy on Estonia but not on Latvia or Lithuania; as a result, Estonia no longer buys energy from Russia,

while Latvia and Lithuania remain more dependent on Moscow's benevolence.

A second and even more troubling control mechanism is corruption. None of these states is strong enough to effectively counter Russian-dominated organized crime. In 1992, for example, Estonia was the fifth largest exporter of light metals in the world even though it does not produce any: virtually all of these "exports" represented the Russian mafia's sell-off of Russian goods and entailed a significant corruption of local officialdom. Moreover, there is growing evidence that the mafia—often with the backing of the Russian intelligence community—has sought to corrupt officials in all three states.

Third, Moscow can seek to use its co-ethnics abroad as a means of pressuring these communities. While various international organizations have found Russian complaints about the mistreatment of ethnic Russians in the Baltic countries unwarranted and while Moscow has been fundamentally dishonest about its right to protect those who are not its citizens, charges of "human rights abuses" put the Baltic governments on the defensive and isolate them. Not surprisingly, these charges will continue or even expand now that the troops are gone. In addition, there is the risk that changes in Moscow could lead to a more direct exploitation of Russians as a pressure group. Gorbachev's government attempted to do that in 1991, and the Latvian government identified more than a dozen Moscow-backed paramilitary groups within its borders in 1992 and 1993.

So overwhelming are these common problems and so long has the West reduced the Baltic question to a single issue that many people in the Baltic countries, in the West and even in Moscow have ignored the often equally important differences among the three:

Cultural Differences. The three countries have radically different cultural traditions: Lithuania is Roman Catholic and conceives of itself as an outpost of Europe under attack, much like Spain; Latvia is Lutheran and views itself as part of the old German-dominated Hansa tradition; and Estonia, only superficially Protestant, views itself squarely within the Scandinavian orbit. These differences have important political consequences: Lithuanian leaders tend to stress the moral dimension of politics and are often uncomfortable with both the practical details of political life and the need to live among their neighbors; Latvian leaders often seek to reduce questions of international relations to matters of law and legal negotiation; and Estonian officials often see the international system as a kind of game in which the small but clever can win out over the large but less clever.

Demographic Differences. Because of differences in the birthrate and in industrialization, Soviet-sponsored immigration of ethnic Russians has left a situation in which the population of Lithuania is still 80 percent

ethnic Lithuanian and the major minority are the Poles; the population of Latvia is now only 50 percent ethnic Latvian with more than two-thirds of the others being ethnic Russians; and the population of Estonia is now 62 percent ethnic Estonian and 32 percent ethnic Russian. As a result of these very different circumstances, Lithuania adopted a "zero-option" citizenship law in which all residents at the time of the declaration of independence were allowed to claim citizenship, but Estonia and Latvia took a different route. Basing their laws on the fact that occupied countries are not required under international law to give citizenship to those brought in by the occupying authorities, they adopted more restrictive legislation: Estonia requires a two-year residence requirement, minimal knowledge of Estonian, and a loyalty declaration; Latvia has adopted a similar but somewhat stricter law.

Another aspect of the demographic situation that has received somewhat less attention is the diaspora populations of the Baltics and their role both abroad and at home. In the United States alone, there are nearly 800,000 ethnic Lithuanians, 65,000 ethnic Latvians, and 25,000 ethnic Estonians, who collectively have had a significant political impact and represent a major political resource for the Baltic countries. In other countries, too, there are sizeable Baltic diasporas. These diasporas represent a significant political force in their home countries—a highly visible one in Estonia, a less visible but more extensive one in Latvia, and a declining one in Lithuania—again reflecting both differences in possibilities and choices of the three states.

And still a third demographic aspect that is likely to matter more and more in the future is that the indigenous populations of Estonia and Latvia are among the oldest in Europe, thus placing expanding political demands on the state for pensions and other services, while that of Lithuania is much younger, creating other kinds of strains. Moreover, there are significant differences in the growth rates of the titular nationalities and the migrant populations. In both Estonia and Latvia, Russians, on average, have far more children than do the currently dominant group. This pattern represents both a long-term problem and a short-term issue that some local groups are exploiting.

Geographical Differences. These are so obvious that they are seldom commented upon, but they have had a profound impact on the question of Russian troop withdrawal. Because of Kaliningrad, troop withdrawal from Lithuania was really about base closing, since Vilnius had to concede transit rights to Russian forces going to and from that non-contiguous part of the Russian Federation. Because of Skrunda, troop withdrawal from Latvia was also something less than total. And because Estonia did not leave either of these levers in Russian hands, troop withdrawal meant troop withdrawal and therefore was the most difficult. An-

other aspect of profound geographical importance are ports. All three Baltic countries have excellent port facilities, but only Tallinn, in Estonia, is a deep-water port. As a result, Russia's decision two years ago to shift the transport of its bulk cargoes from medium-sized ships that could go to any of these ports to larger ships that could only use Tallinn represented a major "assist" from Moscow—and certainly an unintended one. And a third aspect of geography concerns resources, agricultural and mineral. Lithuania and Estonia both are agricultural exporters, whereas Latvia must import food. But only Estonia has proven fuel reserves—the oil shale fields in the northeast—while Lithuania is seeking to explore an oil field in its western regions.

Economic Differences. Prior to the recovery of independence, all three Baltic economies were tightly integrated into the Soviet one with more than 90 percent of their trade being with other Soviet republics. All three have attempted to change this, but their ability to do so has been affected by different government policies and by the nature of their economies. Lithuania, which has moved the most slowly on economic reform and hence attracted the least foreign investment, has made little progress in reducing its integration with the East or stemming the decline in production. Latvia, which has moved more quickly on economic reform but whose large heavy industrial sector remains dependent on and connected with the Russian market, has reduced its trade with the east to approximately 60 percent of the total but also has seen serious production declines. And Estonia, which has adopted the most radical form of "shock therapy," has attracted more foreign aid in the last year than has Russia, has a light industrial base that can be most easily reoriented, and has reduced its trade exposure to the east to under 20 percent, thus largely freeing it up from this form of Russian influence. Moreover, it has been the first of the former Soviet republics to reverse the serious decline and show real economic growth; European experts suggest that its economy will expand by nearly 7 percent in 1995.

Political Differences. All three countries face the challenge that Timothy Garton Ash has called the tradeoff between competence and innocence, between those with experience but with checkered pasts and those who are innocent but also lack necessary skills. For obvious reasons, neither choice is without difficulties. Lithuania's political landscape started with a group of the second kind and has now shifted to, the first. Estonia has stayed with the second—it now has the youngest government in Europe since Lenin's first Bolshevik regime—but at a cost. And Latvia has tacked between the two.

While the current Baltic governments—in sharp contrast to the other former Soviet republics—benefited from the earlier thrashing out of many

political issues and from the formation of political movements, none has a well-organized party system. Indeed, the only parties that seem to have any real discipline are the former Communists in Lithuania. Latvia has made somewhat more progress in this direction, with real parties in the parliament but at the cost of continuing fractiousness. And Estonia has lagged, with politics there remaining both more personal and disorganized. As a result, decision making more often resembles county courthouse politics—in which one makes friends and then makes deals—rather than parliamentary politics, in which one pursues an agreed-upon agenda.

The three Baltic governments are at different stages of the roller coaster on which all post-Soviet states seem positioned. The initial shift to the right in Lithuania has been followed by a shift to the left, as in Poland and Hungary. That pattern is likely to be repeated in Estonia in the next elections—the current rightist government is backed by only 5 percent of the voters—but may be attenuated in Latvia where the government has followed a more cautious and moderate approach. But this shift to the left—which all too many people in the West are celebrating as a good thing and a restoration of balance—is not the end of the story: not only will it slow down economic growth but it will exacerbate old tensions since much of the left is viewed as ineluctably tied to the old Communists. And should a more aggressive government appear in Moscow, these factors could easily combine to produce a more rightist government than before—a pattern that already seems possible in Latvia in the near future.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

These commonalities and differences in the position of the three countries relative to Moscow and the world were well reflected in the endgame on Russian troop withdrawal.

In Lithuania, the first to get an agreement on Russian troop withdrawal, then President Vytautas Landsbergis met with Boris Yeltsin to sign an accord on September 8, 1992. After denouncing the general agreement that remained unsigned as a result, Landsbergis signed the partial agreements that conceded to Moscow rights of transit to Kaliningrad, and the Russian troops left by August 31, 1993—but not before another round of last-minute delays by Moscow and nasty propaganda exchanges on both sides.

Lithuania started by staking out the most dramatic challenge to Moscow and has found itself in the unpleasant position of not being able to follow through on that. As noted, it has not been able to reorient its economy away from Russia, attract needed foreign investment from the West, or even stabilize the situation at home. Its ties with the West have been difficult and even problematic with the diaspora. Many West-

ern officials who were put off by the dramatics of the Landsbergis regime are now discouraged by a government that seems more old style than most. Moreover, Lithuania has had the most uncomfortable relationship with the diaspora. Not only did Lithuanian voters reject Vilnius' ambassador to Washington, Stasys Lozoraitis—a hero in the diaspora—when he ran for president, precisely because he was viewed as out-of-touch with Lithuanian realities, but the current government has pushed out virtually all the Western Lithuanians who earlier had served there. And while Lithuania has had the easiest time with its citizenship law, Vilnius' problem with the Poles—and with Poland—continue.

In Latvia, the second to get an agreement, the two sides proceeded in a step-by-step manner, with numerous agreements initialed and signed. And after careful, behind-the-scenes diplomacy on Skrudna, the two sides agreed to a general accord on April 30, 1994, with a final withdrawal date of August 31. The last Russian troops left on July 30 with little fuss.

Riga, in the middle here as so often, has pushed economic reforms more consistently, introduced a stable currency, attracted some Western investment, but has found it difficult to reorient its economy away from the east. Unlike Lithuania, it has developed good relations with its diaspora: there are more than a dozen Western Latvians in the parliament and many more elsewhere in the government. But their involvement has been quiet and low-key. The citizenship law situation has now been resolved: Riga was forced to back down from a quota system under intense international pressure in July 1992, and its integration into the Council of Europe now seems assured. In everything, Latvia has been careful and calculating, defending its interests where it can and giving ground where it has to.

In Estonia, the last to get an agreement, the situation was fundamentally different. The negotiations seldom led anywhere, with Moscow sometimes making promises at one session that it would renege on at the very next one. Instead, the Estonians pursued an active public diplomacy in Europe and in the United States Congress and counted on the Russian side to withdraw before August 31, 1994, lest Moscow be embarrassed in Berlin on that date. Having allowed things to go this far, the two presidents—Lennart Meri of Estonia and Yeltsin of Russia—in a final poker session on July 22, agreed to August 31.

Economically, Estonia is at the other extreme from Lithuania. Its radical government has pursued shock therapy with a vengeance—and at a cost to its domestic support—reorienting the economy away from the east, attracting enormous Western investment, and promoting growth even at the cost of bankruptcies and unemployment. Like Latvia, Estonia has a very hard currency, the kroon. But unlike Riga, Tallinn did

everything more dramatically: it was the first to break with the ruble zone, and the picture on the back of the five-kroon note says it all. It shows a picture of the Estonian-Russian border at Narva. Over the Russian side are dark storm clouds; over the Estonian side, bright sunshine.

Equally "in your face" was Estonia's decision to hire retired United States army colonel Alexander Einseln as its chief of staff. Einseln, an Estonian-American, was an implicit challenge to both Washington and Moscow, but his status has now been regularized in the United States, where his pension was restored, and accepted in Moscow, where his skills as a commander are acknowledged if not entirely welcomed. Other Western Estonians have served in the parliament, the cabinet, and in key ministries.

Like Latvia, Estonia has had problems with its citizenship legislation—especially its regulation of non-citizen residents. But unlike Latvia, Estonia's president preemptively asked international organizations such as the CSCE and the Council of Europe to review its laws, thus receiving plaudits from the international community and probably more approval from the specific institutions than might otherwise have been the case.

These differences in what might be called the "domestic" side of national security have been mirrored in the foreign policies of the three states. While all three have sought and obtained recognition and membership in international organizations, and all three have been interested in promoting Baltic cooperation, their differences in approach are striking.

Lithuania has enormous difficulties dealing with its immediate neighbors, Poland and Belarus, thus limiting its ability to find a counterweight to Russian power. Moreover, it has sought the dramatic rather than the possible. Just like his predecessor to whom he is so often contrasted, Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas asked for NATO membership this spring while the other two Baltic countries were content with exploiting the possibilities of Partnership for Peace. But this dramatic gesture was not followed up by active diplomacy in either Europe or Washington.

Latvia has pursued a more cautious, step-by-step approach. It has expanded its ties toward Europe, especially Germany, although its foreign policy has been marred by a turnover in foreign ministers. It has made few missteps—establishing consular relations with Taiwan at the cost of ties with Beijing was one but this has now been reversed—but has taken few dramatic steps either. Perhaps the most important was Riga's unsuccessful effort to promote a Baltic-Black Sea security zone arrangement with meetings in Latvia during mid-1993 of representatives from the various countries in this zone.

Estonia has pursued the most aggressive diplomatic campaign, with its leaders visiting all the major countries in Europe, America, and around the Russian

Federation. It has developed extensive ties with Japan, China, Turkey, and Kazakhstan and has pursued expanded ties with Poland, the Czech Republic, and Ukraine—all of these visits and agreements subordinate to the idea of finding a counterweight to Russia. Perhaps even more important, Estonia—and Einseln in particular—has taken the lead in promoting a Baltic peacekeeping battalion under NATO's Partnership for Peace program, and like its neighbors has participated in NATO-related exercises.

UNCERTAIN OUTCOMES

While history may end in some countries, it has not stopped in the Baltic states. Indeed, the Baltic search for security must be a continuous one precisely because its goal is not something that the Balts can achieve on their own: they will always remain dependent on what happens in Moscow and the West even as they seek to deepen their independence. But there are three interlocking patterns that are likely to continue to define this complex relationship:

First, the shift to the left that has already taken place in Lithuania and seems certain to occur in Estonia and possibly in Latvia will not end the story. Indeed, to the extent that these countries feel isolated in the face of Russian power—and that is increasingly likely given American withdrawal from the world and the inability of Europe to push an agenda against the wishes of Moscow—a shift to the right is virtually certain, one that will bring to power governments that are more anti-Russian and also less European in orientation than those we have seen so far. That will further isolate these countries and undercut the very security that these new regimes will claim to be seeking.

Second, what security the Baltic states can achieve will be achieved by economic means. That will require both the reorientation of their economies toward the West something Estonia has taken the lead in—and nonthreatening cooperation with the Russian Federation and the other countries of the former Soviet Union—something Lithuania and Latvia seem better positioned to do.

And third, the Baltic countries and Russia will continue to find themselves in a security trap, albeit with very different resources. If Moscow tries to increase Russian pressure on the Baltic states, it will produce regimes that will be increasingly anti-Russian and uncooperative, whereas if it pursues a policy of greater toleration, it will obtain more cooperative Baltic states. And the reverse is true for the Baltic states, although naturally their influence is much less and they cannot push things to the brink as Russia quite easily can. As a result, there remains an important role for the West—which has interests in both groups—a role that it can fulfill only if it recognizes that the Baltic "question" has not yet been answered. ■

In the three years since independence, Belarus has looked to its enormous eastern neighbor to save its economy and provide guidance. But now, "It seems even the most pro-Russian politicians are waking up to the fact that Belarus is a separate entity."

Belarus: You Can't Go Home Again?

BY USTINA MARKUS

Few doubt that the Baltic states are determined to preserve their independence at any cost and will not allow Russia to dominate them again. The same can be said of Ukraine, even though its eastern part and Crimea exhibit pro-Russian tendencies. Belarus, however, did not agitate for independence in the manner of its neighbors, and now seeks to preserve ties with Russia rather than stand on its own economically or militarily.

Belarus is the only European republic of the former Soviet Union eager to return to the ruble zone, even though this may well mean ceding control of its monetary policy to Russia. While the country did not sign the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) collective security pact in Tashkent in May 1992, parliament later ordered Stanislau Shushkevich, then chairman of the Supreme Soviet, to sign it—which, despite his objections, he did this January. Belarus also refrained from joining NATO's Partnership for Peace, a scheme other East European countries have enthusiastically embraced as a first step toward full membership in NATO, saying it would wait and see what Russia did first.

The country does not appear to share other former republics' aversion to manifestations of the former Soviet Union. The name of the leading newspaper is still *Sovetskaya Belorussiya*, a Supreme Soviet is still the governing body, and Belarus unabashedly continues to call its security ministry the "KGB." If this were not enough to prove Belarus's independence stands on shaky foundations, one need only look at the campaign preceding the country's first presidential election in July. The two pro-Russian candidates, Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich and the flamboyant Aleksandr Lukashenko, took part in a televised debate in which each vied for support by trying to prove he was more pro-Russian than his opponent.

Despite all this, Belarus is an independent state and is recognized as such by other countries. It also has

interests regarding the economy and foreign relations that do not necessarily coincide with Russia's. In these areas at least, the demonstrative pro-Russian behavior makes little sense. In fact, while the majority of Belarus's politicians are outspoken about their affinity for their larger neighbor to the east, there is evidence that they have not lost sight of their own nation's interests.

When parliament ordered Shushkevich to sign the CIS collective security agreement, it had also inserted provisions into the document that Russia found completely unacceptable. The pact has become a moot issue since Russia will not ratify the amended version. The agreement on monetary union, which would give Moscow control over the emission of money and credit in Belarus, may well go the same way. All the details had not been worked out when the papers were signed April 12, and in subsequent talks on key points it has become apparent that some Belarusian officials are opposed to ceding control over monetary policy to Russia. Finally, despite the "I am more pro-Russian than you are" competition during the campaign, since his election as president Lukashenko has become more protective of Belarus's interests. It seems even the most pro-Russian politicians are waking up to the fact that Belarus is a separate entity.

MELTDOWN AND MASS GRAVES

The late 1980s saw the emergence of a nationalist opposition movement in the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Although not as large as Sajudis in Lithuania or Rukh in Ukraine, it exerted considerable influence for its size. Unlike the Lithuanian or Ukrainian movements, popular support for the Belarusian opposition stemmed less from a strong sense of nationalism than from a general dissatisfaction with Moscow authorities' handling of matters concerning Belarus.

Two things galvanized the nation into calling for political reform: the effects of the Chernobyl disaster and the discovery of the mass graves at Stalin's death camp at Kurapaty. Both cases starkly illustrated Moscow's attitude. The 1986 partial meltdown at a nuclear

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power plant in Chernobyl, Ukraine, affected Belarus more than any other republic: 23 percent of Belarus's territory was contaminated by radiation. Moscow did not immediately evacuate people from irradiated areas, and republic officials complained that the funds Moscow allocated for the cleanup in Belarus were inadequate, and that the money was often never even received.

Two years later, in 1988, the revelation that Stalin had ordered the execution of some 250,000 people at Kurapaty shook Belarusians to the core. People began to demand that the authorities in Russia be held accountable for their policies in Belarus. In June 1989 the nationalist opposition Belarusian Popular Front was established, and Zyanon Paznyak, the archeologist who had publicized the Kurapaty graves, was elected its leader.

While the front commanded considerable popular support for its stand on Chernobyl and other practical issues, Belarusians were less inclined to support its calls for independence for the republic. Although sovereignty was declared in July 1990, this was less a case of Belarusian desire to break away from Moscow than one of follow-your-neighbor, especially since Russia had already declared sovereignty. The following March a referendum was held in the Soviet republics on the question of preserving the union. The overwhelming majority of Belarusians—83 percent—favored its preservation, well above the 76.4 percent average in the other republics. When strikes and demonstrations were called in Belarus in April 1991, they were over price increases, not nationalism. The strikes led to the formation of an independent labor movement which, along with the Popular Front, became active in calling for political change in the republic.

Unlike its neighbors, who declared independence to rid themselves of Russian rule, Belarus declared independence to preserve the power of the Communist Party within its borders. The last elections for the republic Supreme Soviet were held in 1990. Although technically multiparty elections, the Communist Party controlled the media and the republic's enterprises and institutions; Communist candidates captured a majority of the seats, while opposition candidates gained only some 10 percent. The Popular Front's calls for independence and national revival did not evoke strong emotions in the republic, as similar appeals did in Ukraine and the Baltics, and the Communist deputies were content to sit comfortably in the Supreme Soviet under the Soviet system.

It was Moscow's actions and the Central Committee in Minsk's refusal to denounce the attempted putsch of August 19, 1991, that finally prompted political change in Belarus. When news of the hard-liners' coup reached the republic August 21, the Central Committee of the Belarusian Communist Party did not attempt to hide its

satisfaction. Reports of the coup's failure subsequently moved the 34 opposition deputies to demand that the Belarusian Supreme Soviet meet in an extraordinary session. Other deputies upheld the call, and in the session that followed they demanded that the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Mikalai Dzemyantsei, resign because he had not condemned the coup leaders. Dzemyantsei resisted, but the news that Mikhail Gorbachev had resigned as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and suspended the party's activities shocked the Belarusian branch.

It was decided to put the republic's Communist party beyond Gorbachev's control by declaring independence. The opposition took advantage of the situation and gained some concessions from the confused Communist-dominated parliament: Dzemyantsei was forced to resign; the Belarusian Communist Party was suspended and its property handed over to local authorities; and the KGB and Interior Ministry were placed under republic control. The day before, Dzemyantsei and his government had suspended their party memberships but had not resigned from the party, which most believed would remain the vehicle for governing the country.

While citizens and officials supported increased self-government in Belarus, most still viewed the country in the context of the Soviet Union. With Ukraine's overwhelming vote for independence on December 1, however, it became clear the union was no longer viable, and Belarus was once again pushed toward independent status, rather than actively seeking it. On December 8, 1991, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, and the new chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet, Stanislau Shushkevich, meeting in Belavezha, Belarus, announced the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), formally putting an end to the Soviet Union.

A MAVERICK PRESIDENT

Although the Belarusian Popular Front had scored a victory in temporarily banning the Communist Party, real reforms could not take place while the old guard remained in power. A campaign was launched in January 1992 to collect signatures on a petition calling for a fall referendum on early elections. More than 442,000 names were collected, and although a substantial number of the signatures were invalidated, the remaining 384,000 met the minimum of 350,000 necessary to force a referendum. Parliament should have set a date for the referendum at its next session; instead, the session was delayed for six months, during which time the suspended Belarusian Communist Party regrouped as the Party of Communists of Belarus (PCB). When parliament finally reconvened it banned the referendum, claiming there had been violations in the signature collection drive.

Although many did not join the new party (chief among them Prime Minister Kebich and his cabinet), the PCB became the umbrella organization for Belarus's Communist parties (it has three at the moment) and pro-Russian groups, including the Popular Movement of Belarus, Kebich's support base in the Supreme Soviet. In the legislature and the country, Communists clearly continue to dominate. Signatures supporting the holding of an early election were again gathered last fall, but parliament failed to take any steps to organize such a vote, and its members are likely to stay in office until the end of their term in 1995.

The conservative nature of parliament was also evident in the slow pace of political and economic reform. In July 1993 a privatization law was finally passed. But the legislation was a victory for the collective farms, which had opposed the redistribution of land for private use: it recognized the right of collective and state farms to use land, and in effect meant only that individuals could now own their own dachas. As for privatization of state-owned enterprises in Belarus, it has hardly begun. There were some hopes that Shushkevich would push the country along in its economic reforms, but authority actually lay in the hands of the conservative Kebich, who controlled the ministries, while Shushkevich was largely a figurehead.

Despite his lack of real power Shushkevich still managed to annoy the conservative, Russian-oriented parliament enough to be voted out of office this January. The body first tried to oust him in the summer of 1993, but could not do so because it did not have a quorum. (Absenteeism is high because most delegates are collective farm managers who must supervise work on the farm.) This first no-confidence vote was prompted by Shushkevich's opposition to Belarus's participation in the CIS collective security pact. At the next parliamentary session, which began last November, the outspoken Aleksandr Lukashenko charged Shushkevich, and Kebich as well, with corruption. These charges were raised again in January, and a no-confidence vote was taken on Shushkevich and Kebich over their failure to tackle corruption in the government. The prime minister survived the vote but Shushkevich did not. He was replaced as chairman of parliament with a Kebich crony and supporter of the CIS collective security pact, Mechyslau Hryb.

The only hope of proceeding with reforms in the country now lay in the election of a reform-minded president, though this was highly unlikely, with much of the electorate nostalgic for the Soviet era. Although the opposition had been agitating for political reform and early parliamentary elections, it opposed the introduction of a presidency at this stage of the new country's independence; the Popular Front argued that the democratic system was still too immature for truly democratic elections to be held, and feared that any

electoral laws adopted by parliament would favor Kebich in the presidential race.

After two years of debate, parliament approved a new constitution, which went into effect March 30. The constitution established the office of president, and an election for the post was rapidly organized and held July 10. Kebich was decisively beaten in the race by anticorruption crusader Lukashenko. Both candidates wooed the electorate with their pro-Russian stands on economic and political issues: both had supported the CIS collective security pact; both wanted quick monetary union with Russia; both regarded relations with Russia as the top priority for Belarus. Lukashenko went even further, calling for outright unification with Russia. He also traveled there during the campaign on the invitation of Vladimir Zhirinovsky, the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, the victor in Russian parliamentary elections in December, who calls for Russia's reacquisition of the "near abroad."

Lukashenko's take of more than 80 percent of the popular vote, to 14 percent for Kebich, shows that nationalism is not an overriding concern for the electorate in Belarus. Kebich's defeat signaled that the country had become disillusioned with its conservative leaders as living standards declined, and wanted change, even if it came in the person of a youngish raving anticorruption crusader. While Lukashenko's pro-Russian statements during the race led many observers to wonder how long Belarus would remain independent if he were elected the country's first president, he has toned down his pro-Russian rhetoric since winning the post. If former Communist Algirdas Brazauskas, the president of Lithuania, and former party ideologue Leonid Kravchuk, who lost his job as president of Ukraine in July balloting, are any indication, the trend is to become more nationalistic once elected president. It remains to be seen whether Lukashenko will adhere to that pattern.

A RUDE ECONOMIC AWAKENING

Russia, Belarus's most important economic partner, supplied the former republic with some 90 percent of its energy requirements and more than 70 percent of its raw materials, without which the manufacturing base cannot function. Initially it was hoped the CIS would allow old economic links to continue functioning, thus ensuring economic and political stability in Belarus. But it soon became obvious that this was not to be, and the former republics increasingly relied on bilateral agreements to preserve ties.

The Belarusian parliament and the Kebich government were slow in assessing the new situation following the breakup of the Soviet Union. Russia embarked on an economic reform program and began treating the former Soviet republics as economically independent states. The price of Russian natural gas and oil rose to world market levels and Moscow began to control its

currency emission and credit policy more carefully as it tried to bring down inflation in Russia. Rather than formulate an economic reform program for Belarus that would take into account Moscow's new policies, Belarusian authorities made no serious progress in that direction, opting instead for political/economic agreements with Russia to ensure continued supplies of energy and raw materials.

The energy debt climbed to \$350 million for oil and \$100 million for natural gas by June 1993, and the government was finally jolted into dealing with the problem when, after repeated warnings, Russia cut energy supplies that August. Minsk made partial payment but was faced with another gas cutoff in September when Belarus fell behind in its payments once more. Kebich claimed the debt had been paid by the end of the year, but this March Russia cut off the flow of gas yet again over the issue of Belarus's \$230-million debt.

The energy crisis has had serious repercussions for Belarus's industrial and agricultural production. The higher cost of energy has made the country's products uncompetitive in its former CIS markets. At the same time, since Minsk cannot afford to meet its energy costs, many enterprises function at only a fraction of their full capacity. Unemployment has been kept low by the government's continued subsidies to bankrupt enterprises, but this generous credit policy (up to 30 percent of the budget was allotted for industrial subsidies and 20 percent for agricultural subsidies in 1993) has contributed to a rising inflation rate that this year reached the hyperinflation level of 50 percent a month.

The problem of making payments on its energy arrears was compounded by the shortage of rubles in Belarus; pursuing its economic reforms, Russia instituted stringent controls on the amount of rubles it supplied to other former Soviet republics in the ruble zone. To deal with the shortage, Belarus in May 1992 began printing its own parallel currency, the Belarusian ruble, colloquially known as the *zaichyk*, or hare. The value of the *zaichyk* was officially tied to that of the ruble, but Russia was not willing to accept the unsecured currency in payment for its energy and raw material supplies.

Furthermore, Russia announced in June 1993 that it would stop supplying other former republics with rubles if their monetary policies were not in line with those of Russia. Among the conditions Russia laid down for those wishing to remain in the ruble zone were that the ruble be the only legal tender in the country; that the Russian Central Bank have control over the amount of cash and credit supplied by banks; that banking laws match those of Russia; and that Russian controlling bodies oversee compliance with these conditions. Ultimately only war-torn Tajikistan found the terms acceptable. Other ruble users with-

drew from the ruble zone, saying the conditions impinged on their national sovereignty.

After Russia's sudden withdrawal in July 1993 of banknotes printed between 1961 and 1992, the movement to set up a full-fledged national currency gained support in Belarus. Nonetheless, the gas cutoffs convinced others, Kebich among them, that the only solution to Belarus's economic plight and difficulty in making energy payments was to remain in the ruble zone. In September 1993 Kebich and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin signed letters of intent on economic and monetary union. Details of the merger were not worked out. The Belarusian parliament voted overwhelmingly in favor of the scheme, rather than attempting to devise a national economic reform program.

The agreement was signed April 12, with Kebich hailing it as the solution to Belarus's economic woes. Under its terms economic union was to take place in two stages. Beginning May 1 trade and customs restrictions between the two countries were to be lifted, and Russia was also to be allowed the free use of strategic arms installations in Belarus. In the second stage, to begin later, Belarusians would be able to exchange their *zaichyks* for rubles and the Russian Central Bank would have the sole right to issue currency and conduct monetary policy.

The accord had critics in both Russia and Belarus. The main Russian critics were the former economics minister, Yegor Gaidar, and the former finance minister, Boris Fedorov. Both pointed out that Belarus's economic policies and development were incompatible with Russia's, so the agreement was impractical and would only be detrimental to the Russian economy. They cited Belarus's persistent liberal credit policies as a future drain on Russia; noted that privatization had hardly begun in Belarus, while it was well on its way in Russia; and observed that Belarus continued to subsidize consumer goods while Russia had long since ceased setting prices.

The main critics in Belarus were the Popular Front, Shushkevich, and the chairman of the National Bank of Belarus, Stanislau Bahdankevich. The Popular Front charged that the agreement was a sellout of Belarusian sovereignty in exchange for cheap Russian gas. (As part of the agreement Belarus had negotiated a provision that it would pay the same price as Russian consumers for its energy supplies.) The front pointed out that the hopes of receiving energy supplies at subsidized prices were illusory, since Russia was bringing the cost of energy to world levels for its own consumers. Bahdankevich, who had never criticized Kebich and his government before, became the most outspoken opponent of monetary union, saying it violated the constitution, which explicitly states that only the National Bank of Belarus could legally issue money. It was also noted that while the agreement called for a 1:1 exchange of

rubles for zaichyks, this was only for very limited amounts: each Belarusian was entitled to exchange only some 200,000 zaichyks (less than \$10) in cash and 1 million zaichyks (\$50) in savings. Thus Russia would face only a limited liability in exchanging the zaichyk. (In July 1994 the zaichyk was trading at 25,000 to the dollar while the ruble stood at 2,000 to the dollar.) To date the accord has not been ratified by the Russian Duma, and remains unimplemented.

THE GOOD REPUBLIC

Unlike Ukraine, which was seen by many as uncooperative because of its protracted debates over signing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-1), Belarus was a shining example of a cooperative international player in regard to these accords. The republic had inherited 82 long-range single-warhead mobile ss-25 nuclear missiles from the Soviet strategic arsenal. Rather than engaging in debates over whether it should be a nuclear state, or what security guarantees outside powers should provide or how much compensation it should receive for dismantling the missiles, Belarus in November 1992 declared itself a nonnuclear and neutral country. In February 1993 parliament ratified both the Non-Proliferation Treaty and START-1 by a large majority. Belarus also called for the weapons to be removed in two and a half years rather than the seven it had earlier agreed to. In addition, the reduction of conventional weapons as called for in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty has been proceeding on schedule.

The exemplary behavior has not been rewarded. Last October Belarus put forward its candidacy for a seat on the UN Security Council, arguing it deserved it for setting a good example by signing the disarmament agreements. The seat instead went to the Czech Republic. Belarus has also been disappointed in the amount of foreign aid and investment it has received. Foreign and international banks and other financial institutions have made it clear that investment and credits will be granted on the basis of progress in economic reform. Thus political goodwill bought Belarus little influence internationally and has not attracted foreign capital.

The same can be said of Belarus's relations with Russia. The Russian Federation remains by far the most important foreign economic and political partner for Belarus. Yet despite the government in Minsk's willingness to make political concessions to its large eastern neighbor, Belarus has found its "big brother" treats it no better than recalcitrant Ukraine when it fails to make payments on its energy debt. Ruling conservative circles had cherished the belief that, so long as Belarus supported Russia in international affairs, it would somehow receive special treatment. Thus Kebich and

his government have been painfully slow in accepting that Russia and Belarus no longer have the same relationship they had during the Soviet era, and in recognizing that there is a new leadership in Moscow.

The failure to understand that Russia is proceeding with its major economic restructuring was absurdly apparent during negotiations on monetary union. While Russian critics cited Belarus's slow progress on economic reform as an obstacle to implementing the accord on monetary union, Kebich announced that such union in no way meant Belarus would have to follow Russia's lead in its economic reforms.

As for relations with its other neighbors—Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Ukraine—Belarus has signed numerous cooperation agreements with all of them. But most remain paper accords, since these countries do not have the money to invest in each other and even if they did would be more likely to put it into Germany and other countries in western Europe. Belarus's neighbors tend to view the country as a Russian outpost, and feel it makes little difference who runs Belarus or how its reforms are proceeding. This lack of interest or activity in Belarus is partly because Belarus has not exhibited any real foreign policy aims, with the exception of maintaining good relations with its neighbors and the world. This in turn can be attributed to a feeling in Belarus that it was unnecessary for the country to formulate a foreign policy agenda, since it is too poor to exercise influence in international affairs. Thus Belarusian independence is not taken too seriously in eastern Europe, while the West often seems aware only of how disarmament in the former republic is proceeding.

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

The election of Lukashenko as president may well be the turning point in the history of independent Belarus. Lukashenko's statements during the campaign make it difficult to predict what kind of program he will institute or whether he will simply resort to populist distraction and avoid dealing with the problems facing the country. With a bright and youthful (albeit conservative) team behind him, there is a chance they will come up with a coherent economic and foreign policy for Belarus rather than continue with the Kebich nontactic of hoping Russia bails out the republic.

As for uniting with Russia, this would seem unrealistic. Russia does not need the international disapproval such a move would elicit. In addition, the nationally conscious Belarusian Popular Front would probably riot in protest against the prospect, further dissuading Russia from this option. Finally, while Zhirinovskiy may wish for a reconstituted Soviet Union, many Russians have no interest in incorporating Belarus into the Russian Federation. ■

"Moldova stands out not because it is the site of ethnic conflict but because it has successfully avoided being drawn into a catastrophic ethnic war of the sort that can be pointed to all too readily in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union."

Moldova after Independence

BY WILLIAM CROWTHER

Moldova declared independence on August 27, 1991, with little in the way of resources, with fundamental questions of political organization unresolved, and with its sovereignty challenged. The new state still faces international and acute domestic problems. The rise to power of ethnic Moldovans and calls by some for unification with Romania have led to conflict with minority nationalities. Economic crisis looms as a consequence of the collapse of Soviet economic institutions and the conflict in the Transdnister region. Moldova's current politics reflect this turbulent environment and the deep divisions within the post-Communist elite.

INTERTWINED AT THE ROOT

Moldova, like neighboring Romania, is inhabited primarily by a people whose presence in the region dates from the period of Roman colonization and who speak Romanian, a Latin tongue. Because of its geography and history, however, Moldova's population has long been more heterogeneous than that of Romania. Today approximately 64 percent of the people are ethnic Moldovans, 14 percent are Ukrainians, 13 percent Russians, 3.5 percent Gagauzi (a Turkic-language-speaking, Orthodox Christian people who originated in Bulgaria), and 2 percent Bulgarians.

An independent principality that included the territory of contemporary Moldova was first established in the fourteenth century. During the second half of the fifteenth century this became an Ottoman tributary state that served as a buffer between the Russian and Ottoman Empires. Territory on the east bank of the Dniester River now within Moldova (Transdnistria)

was ceded to Russia by the Ottomans in 1792. Bessarabia, the region between the Dniester and Prut Rivers that makes up the bulk of Moldova today, was annexed by imperial Russia after the Russo-Turkish war of 1806–1812. After the collapse of the Russian Empire, leaders in Bessarabia formed a National Council and voted, on March 27, 1918, to unite with Romania. Not all Moldovan territory, however, shared this fate. Soviet authorities constructed a competing political unit, the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR), comprising 14 districts on the east bank of the Dniester.

In June 1940, Bessarabia was occupied by Soviet forces as a consequence of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement. The Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova was formed August 2, 1940, by joining Bessarabia with eight of the districts of the Moldavian ASSR.¹ Always a relatively poor and primarily agricultural region whose urban economy was based on commerce and food processing, Moldova remained a backwater within the Soviet Union, at or near the bottom of the hierarchy of republics with respect to education and urbanization. Agriculture continued to play a central role, accounting for more than 40 percent of national income. Immigration, particularly of industrial workers, led to Russian-speakers (mainly Russians and Ukrainians) becoming a majority in many cities, while the ethnic makeup of rural Moldova was little affected.

From the very beginning, Moldova's transition from Soviet rule was complicated by intense conflict between ethnic groups. As elsewhere, reforms introduced by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s created conditions in which long-standing resentments could be expressed. By mid-1988 Moldovan dissidents had organized the Democratic Movement in Support of Restructuring (later rechristened the Moldovan Popular Front) to press for democratization and reform of the republic's language laws. (Under Soviet-era legislation, deeply resented among Romanian-speakers, Russian served as the "state language" of the republic and Romanian was written in Cyrillic script.) The prospect of ethnic Moldovans gaining political power sparked an immediate response among minority populations.

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¹Some previously Moldovan territory to the north of the current republic, and the area between the Dniester and the Prut to the south, bordering on the Black Sea, was incorporated into the Ukraine, thus leaving Moldova landlocked.

Many in the Russian community supported the Internationalist Movement for Unity (EDINSTVO), a pro-Russian group whose strongest support was in the cities on the east bank of the Dniester. Gagauz-Halchi, the main organization representing Moldova's Gagauz minority during the early transition period, generally backed the initiatives of the Russian activists.

Elections to the Supreme Soviet in Chisinau in 1990 further exacerbated relations between Moldova's ethnic communities. With the support of a slim majority in the new legislature, the Popular Front aggressively consolidated its power. Ethnic Moldovan deputies, who accounted for about 69 percent of the membership of the legislature, captured 83 percent of the leadership posts in that institution, and nearly excluded minority representation from the new government. Legislators also approved a series of highly controversial measures designed to assert Moldovan national sovereignty over minority resistance.

These early actions of the legislature, which created ill will and gave minority representatives little hope of gaining a fair hearing in Moldovan-dominated institutions, had serious repercussions. City governments controlled by the opposition in Tiraspol, Bender, and Ribnitsa passed measures suspending central government initiatives they considered "Moldovan nationalist." Thus began the transfer of authority from republic institutions to local ones, and competing assertions of sovereignty. In southern Moldova, where almost all Gagauzi in the world live, the minority Gagauz announced the formation of their own republic, on August 21, 1990. In Transdnistria, where the population was approximately 60 percent Russian and Ukrainian and 40 percent ethnic Moldovan, the authorities followed suit on September 2, proclaiming the formation of the Transdnistrian Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic.

NATIONALISM DIVIDES THE NATION

More than any other factor, the Popular Front's promotion of a strongly nationalist agenda shaped the course of political events in the early years of independence. This inexorably hardened the country's initially inchoate political divisions and pushed the competing government authorities toward conflict.²

Despite the outbreak of the separatist crisis, and the hard line on nationality issues adopted by the extremist

faction in the Popular Front, Moldova took a markedly moderate approach to its national minorities. Unfortunately, the negative impression left by extremist proposals tended to overwhelm any positive impact of the moderate legislation actually enacted. A language law approved in August 1989 made Romanian the official language but assured the protection and development of Gagauz and Russian and called for respect for the use of other minority languages. When conflict arose over the law's stipulation that people employed in state organizations and enterprises bringing them in contact with the public must learn Romanian within a set time in order to keep their jobs, the government showed flexibility in enforcing the provision. The citizenship law approved in June 1991 granted citizenship to those not already citizens of another state who had lived in Moldova before the Soviet occupation in 1940, were currently residing in Moldova, or had at least one parent born there. Those living in Moldova at the time of the declaration of sovereignty were given one year—later extended to 18 months—to decide whether to become citizens.

In spite of these signs of moderate tendencies in Chisinau, the separatist crisis continued to escalate. Transdnistria's concentrated urban russophone population came under the sway of the reactionary wing of the former Communist Party. The leadership of this faction is not simply Russian nationalist, but politically reactionary, typical of the forces that emerged in Russia proper. Tiraspol, the capital of breakaway Transdnistria, supported the August 1991 coup attempt in Moscow, and its leaders have yet to recant. Their intransigence should be seen not simply as a rejection of minority status in a multiethnic state but, perhaps more important, as a rejection of the economic and political changes that swept away the Soviet Union.

Relations between the separatists and Moldova's government were characterized by mutual denunciations and sporadic violence from late 1990 to early 1992, when things took a sharp turn for the worse. As the separatists consolidated their position in Transdnistria with the support of Russia's Fourteenth Army—long headquartered in Tiraspol, and increasingly politicized with the breakdown of authority in Moscow—the nationalists in the Moldovan parliament grew increasingly militant. President Mircea Snegur came under more intense pressure to resolve the conflict. In late March 1992 he declared a state of emergency across the newly independent republic. Soon after, Moldovan government troops in the contested west bank city of Tighina (formerly Bender) attempted to disarm units of the separatist militia. This was met with armed resistance, and by May the conflict had escalated into full-scale civil war.³

The battle with the separatists went nowhere, but it did instigate a domestic political realignment. The Popular Front government's obvious failure to address

²An initial outbreak of violence occurred before independence, in fall 1990. In the Transdnistrian city of Dubasari, militiamen seized the city soviet building as part of their preparations for a planned autonomy referendum in the region. When republic police tried to retake the building, three people were killed and dozens wounded.

³Tighina is on the west ("Moldovan") bank of the Dniester, but its proximity to and close economic and political ties with Tiraspol made it a source of continual tension between Chisinau and the separatist regime.

the heightening economic crisis, and its general ineffectiveness, had already undermined its initial broad support. As with the 14 other former republics, Moldova's economy was thrown into chaos by the breakup of the Soviet system. The Transnistrian conflict also hurt. Reform efforts intended to address the economic emergency began soon after independence but were halting and relatively unproductive, largely because of the inexperience of the new leadership and a general lack of consensus on policy direction.

The opposition was quick to turn reaction against the war into the focus of more general dissatisfaction with Popular Front leaders, who were perceived by many Moldovans as extremist, excessively pro-Romanian, and ineffectual. Members of Village Life, the parliamentary faction of the Democratic Agrarian Party, joined with defectors from the Popular Front and delegates associated with the Soglasie (Accord) faction—these last reform Communists who later became the core of the Socialist Party—to elect Andrei Sangheli, a high-ranking member of the previous regime, to the prime ministership. Sangheli's government, formed in August 1992, significantly reduced the influence of the Popular Front and improved minority representation. It promised more efficient economic reform, and a more moderate approach to the nationalities question.

Confrontation between the anti-Communist and the pro-Romanian forces grouped around the front and the reform Communist and less insistently nationalist forces that comprised the core support of the Sangheli government, dominated parliamentary activity and led to deadlock. Increasingly frustrated, President Snegur, who had initially attempted to position himself between the competing factions, entered the fray against the nationalists. In a December 1992 speech in parliament he advocated a course of autonomous *Moldovan* national development rather than either unification with Romania or close alignment with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS.) The fallout was immediate, both hastening the decline of the Popular Front with respect to other forces and sharpening divisions between moderates and extremists within the front.

By early last year the Popular Front was in near total disarray. In January Alexandru Moshanu, the pro-Popular Front president of parliament, resigned, attacking what he said were elements in the government that favored the former system. In a clear indication of changing trends, parliament voted overwhelmingly to replace Moshanu with Petru Lucinschi, former first secretary of the Moldovan Communist Party and a leader of the very forces Moshanu had warned against. Moldovan intellectuals who had added tremendously to the Popular Front's prestige defected, organizing the Congress of Intellectuals, which promoted a less

extreme nationalist agenda. Politicians more concerned with the economy broke away to form independent parties. The once dominant Popular Front found itself reduced to a mere 25 deputies in the legislature.

This realignment brought the legislature much closer to the president and Prime Minister Sangheli's government. Ultimately, however, even this powerful combination of presidency, government, and Lucinschi's parliamentary leadership proved unable to overcome the hopelessly complex web of factions and rivalries that plagued the legislative branch. Unable to achieve majority support in parliament, local government reform, decisive action in foreign affairs, and a projected new constitution all foundered. Moldovan leaders concluded that the existing assembly was no longer viable. Over the objections of the pro-Romanian faction, a vote was taken to dissolve the Soviet-era institution and hold early elections for a new parliament on February 27, 1994.

MANAGING PARLIAMENT?

According to legislation enacted in October 1993, the new parliament was to be made up of 104 deputies—a much more manageable size, it was hoped, than the 380-member Soviet body. Delegates were to be elected on the basis of proportional representation from closed party lists. Parties had to receive 4 percent of the vote to be accorded seats. In a significant innovation, leaders decided on a single national electoral district. This avoided controversy concerning the separatist regions that could have blocked or otherwise negatively affected the elections.

Campaigning focused on economic reform, competing strategies for the resolution of the separatist crisis, and relations with both the CIS and Romania. An array of small parties, such as the Reform Party, mainly supported by urban professionals, campaigned for rapid marketization and privatization. The reform Communists of the Socialist Party and the Agrarian Democrats called for a slower transition to capitalism. (Their adversaries suggest that they do not want a transition at all, but are not in a position to act openly.) The Agrarian Democrats argued strongly in favor of maintaining some form of collective landholding in agriculture, preferably through the transformation of state farms into peasant cooperatives. Debate on foreign policy was equally polarized. Both the Agrarian Democrats and the Socialist Party, along with EDINSTVO, argued for full participation in the CIS, and taking a conciliatory approach to the Gagauz and Transnistrian separatists. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the nationalist groupings, such as the Popular Front and the National Christian Party, argued for unification with Romania. The more moderate Congress of Intellectuals campaigned for Moldovan independence in the near term, but for close political alignment with

Romania leading to eventual unification, which it sees as a "natural" development.

The results of the first post-Communist elections marked a sharp reversal from the politics of the early transition period. Nationalist and pro-Romanian forces were overwhelmingly rejected in favor of those backing Moldovan independence and accommodation with ethnic minorities. Legislative power passed firmly into the hands of the Agrarian Democrats, who captured 43.2 percent of the vote and 56 of 104 seats in parliament. Another 28 seats went to the Socialist Bloc, which garnered 22 percent of the vote. Pro-Romanian parties suffered a severe setback: the Bloc of Peasants and Intellectuals receiving 9.2 percent of the vote and 11 seats, and the Popular Front Alliance 7.5 percent of the vote and 9 seats. None of the other nine parties and blocs that fielded candidates reached the 4 percent threshold required for participation in the national parliament.

These decisive results from the February election immediately affected the course of Moldovan politics. On July 28 parliament ratified a new constitution that provided substantial autonomy to Transdniestria and Gagauzia while reasserting "Moldovan" national identity and sovereignty. The Agrarians have made clear their commitment to national independence, but are obviously more favorably inclined toward the CIS than their predecessors. They enjoy more support from the russophone minorities in Moldova and better relations with Moscow. Progress in economic reform will probably be slow, because of the Agrarians' cautious attitude toward marketization and privatization. Economic policy in general, however, is likely to be more consistent and better implemented than it has been to date. Dumitru Motpan, the Agrarian Party chairman, has announced his intention to move quickly in implementing the party's proposal to transform the collective and state farms into joint-stock associations owned by the peasant farmers. The new government has also reiterated its commitment to pursuing a comprehensive transition to capitalism. The initial reaction of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to the new government has been positive; both have praised Moldova's progress and approved the Agrarians' proposed course for reform.

HEMMED IN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Moldova's foreign policy efforts have been complicated by its geography, its history, and the ethnic conflict within its borders. Its diplomatic endeavors have necessarily focused on resolving the conflict in Transdniestria and stabilizing new relationships with regional powers, especially Romania and Russia.

The separatist movements have given rise to a complicated tangle of domestic and international problems for Moldovan authorities. Moldova's international status cannot be isolated from the fate of its non-

Romanian minorities, and this consideration necessarily affects its relationship with Russia and the CIS. President Snegur signed the Alma-Ata (now Almaty) declaration creating the Commonwealth of Independent States on December 31, 1991, but Moldova's parliament, at the time strongly influenced by the Popular Front bloc, refused to ratify the agreement. Parliament demurred again in August 1993 but continued to participate in the CIS, with the understanding that Moldova's commitment was limited. Along with Ukraine and Turkmenistan, Moldova refused to sign a January 1993 agreement that would have strengthened ties between commonwealth members. Chisinau thus embarked on a difficult course of independent action, maneuvering between Russia and Romania, each of which has strong interests in the newly established state.

It seems certain that in the absence of external factors Moldova's government could have forcibly suppressed the separatist regimes soon after independence. But the presence in the region of the Russian Fourteenth Army, with the bulk of its forces in Transdniestria, made this impossible. While officially neutral, Russian troops refused to permit the suppression of the Tiraspol government. During the crisis over control of the contested city of Tighina, elements of the Fourteenth Army actively intervened on the side of the separatists, when necessary employing their heavy weapons to turn the tide.

In July 1992 an agreement that relied on the support of Russian President Boris Yeltsin established a cease-fire ending the worst of the fighting in Moldova. Moscow, however, held out for an agreement on long-term rights to bases for the Fourteenth Army on Moldovan territory, which Moldova flatly rejected.

Maintaining a significant military force in Moldova would obviously enhance Russia's influence not just there but in the entire region. Moreover, the Fourteenth Army and the separatist regime in Tiraspol acquired significance in Russia's domestic politics. The Fourteenth's commander, Aleksandr Lebed, who, despite warnings from his superiors vowed not to "abandon" Transdniestria's Russians, became a symbol for Russian conservatives—who likewise view abandonment of Russian minorities in the former Soviet republics as anathema, and whose strength is growing. Troop withdrawal in the Transdniester would, it was thought, leave moderates in Moscow open to political attack from the right. Furthermore, the Fourteenth Army has strong local ties in Transdniestria through the draft and the many retired officers and soldiers who live there, and some observers believed its commanders might resist direct instructions to disengage.

Tiraspol's civil leaders, for their part, have actively engaged in a series of reactionary causes inside Russia, including the dispatch of volunteers to the Russian White House to participate in the attempted overthrow

of Yeltsin in September 1993.⁴ Soon after the recent change of government in Chisinau, however, steps were taken to remove the main stumbling blocks in the path of improved relations between Moldova and Russia. In early August, Moscow announced the status of the Fourteenth Army was being reduced to that of an "operational group." As part of the restructuring, General Lebed was released from his position and the number of officers was reduced (though Lebed is now back, at least for the moment). Shortly afterward Moldova and Russia announced they had reached an agreement that would lead to the withdrawal of Russian forces from Transdniestria within three years. In a major concession, Moldova accepted the linkage between Russian troop withdrawal and the achievement of a political solution to the Transdniestrian conflict. Viewing the agreement as a blow, the Transdniestrian observers at the negotiations walked out.

Ukraine also has important interests at stake in Moldova. Given its own dispute with Moscow on the status of Crimea, the Ukrainians hardly favor the formation of independent Russian political entities outside the territory of the Russian Federation. Neither, on a more practical level, is it in Ukraine's interests to have well-equipped Russian military units in Transdniestria. The Fourteenth Army can be reached from Russia only by traversing Ukrainian territory. Hence it is not surprising that the Ukrainian government has been supportive of Moldova's position in the Transdniestrian conflict. Ukraine has protested the movement of Cossack volunteers across Ukrainian territory to Transdniestria, and has refused to recognize Transdniestrian claims to sovereignty.

Relations between Romania and Moldova have also become increasingly complicated over the past three years. Romania was the first state to recognize Moldova, and provided it with substantial diplomatic and economic support, given its own resources. Close cooperation was fostered by a reemphasis on "Romanianism" among Moldovans in response to years of denial of this heritage during the Soviet period. Support for unification by Moldova's initial Popular Front government created a strong common interest with nationalist politicians in Romania.

Over time, however, the relationship between the two Romanian-speaking states has deteriorated. Because of their historical legacies, Moldovans and Romanians feel quite differently about basic social and political issues. Many Romanians, on becoming conscious of these differences, have concluded that Moldovans have been "denationalized" or "Russified" by the

Soviet experience. In the somewhat condescending view from Bucharest, Moldovans are badly in need of assistance so that they can overcome their cultural disabilities. While this attitude is welcomed by pro-Romanian elements of the elite, it has been the source of growing resentment among a very large majority of Moldovans, who voted overwhelmingly in a referendum in March for the course of national independence.

The evolution of Moldova's separatist crisis also acted as a wedge driving the two countries apart. The prospect of unification with Romania is clearly unacceptable to Moldova's Russian and Gagauz minorities, and was central to the outbreak of ethnic conflict. All aspects of the relationship between Bucharest and Chisinau have become politically charged, watched for the smallest signs of movement toward or away from unification. Across the border in Romania, nationalist elements see concessions to the separatists as evidence of movement toward Moscow, and treason against the Romanian nation. Hence, while rapprochement with Bucharest generates domestic conflict, efforts to resolve the conflict through accommodation with the minorities affect relations with Bucharest.

The Moldovan-Romanian relationship presents complications on the other side of the Prut as well. For his part, Romanian President Ion Iliescu has sought to maintain a positive relationship with the Russian republic. Actions by Bucharest that could be seen as destabilizing Moldova, potentially tipping it into civil war, would be disastrous, not only demolishing Russian-Romanian relations but perhaps drawing Russia into a regional conflict. While Romania's interests here thus seem clear, it is difficult for the country's leaders to take a public stand against unification. Nationalist forces (in particular, the Greater Romania Party and the Party of Romanian National Unity), which are strong in Romania, have been sharply critical of Iliescu's failure to achieve unification immediately upon Moldova's independence. They continue to pressure Romania's government from the right, and struggle to maintain public interest in reunification.

The combined effect has been a sharp decline in relations between Romania and Moldova, especially over the past year. Moldovans are more suspicious of and hostile toward Romania and anything that might constitute its interference in their affairs. Romanian nationalists' distaste for what they perceive as Moldova's continued subservience to Moscow has produced a surge of virulent rhetoric in the Romanian parliament and loss of public support for Chisinau, though little action by the cautious Iliescu government.

THE CALM AFTER THE STORM

Considering the challenges of the current political and economic transition, Moldova has achieved a great deal in the three years since independence. Rather than either uniting with Romania or subordinating them-

⁴For a full account of links between the Transdniestrian forces and conservatives in Russia, see Vladimir Socor, "Dniester Involvement in the Moscow Rebellion," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report*, vol. 2, no. 46 (November 19, 1993), pp. 25-32.

selves to the CIS, Moldovans have managed the difficult task of asserting their independence and are beginning to express their own unique identity. While pursuing closer economic cooperation with the CIS, the new government has continued the policy of resisting political and military integration.

Democratic norms appear to be taking hold and significant progress has been made in constitutional reform. Fundamental changes have been enacted, including promulgation of minority and human rights legislation and progressive citizenship and language laws. A draft constitution was published early last year, with provisions establishing respect for human rights, political pluralism, protection of private property, separation of powers, and the formation of a constitutional court. While passage of a new constitution was delayed by parliamentary deadlock, action should be taken in the near future.

Economic reform has been more problematic for a variety of reasons, not least a lack of consensus among the country's leaders on basic questions of economic orientation. Moldova, like other former Soviet republics, has suffered over the past several years from high inflation and sharp declines in production. Its trade relationships have been disrupted by the breakup of the Soviet economic system, and supply shortages, particularly in natural gas and petroleum products, have become critical. As has been noted, the current Agrarian government can be expected to take a cautious approach to reform over the next several years. But up to now international agencies have expressed a positive view of the Agrarians' program and optimism concerning Moldova's future economic direction.

Most important has been the Moldovans' effort to contain civil strife. Moldova stands out not because it is the site of ethnic conflict but because it has successfully avoided being drawn into a catastrophic ethnic war of the sort that can be pointed to all too readily in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union. After a very bad start in 1990 and 1991, serious efforts have been made by the Moldovan government to end the separatist crisis peacefully and to construct a political system based on cooperative relations between the country's ethnic groups. By the end of last year extremist elements within the political elite had been effectively marginalized. President Snegur has repeatedly stated his government's willingness to accept the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe plan as a basis for resolving the Transdnistria conflict, including provisions calling for devolution of substantial administrative authority to Tiraspol. Moldova has also agreed to a significant transfer of administrative responsibility to local authorities in continuing negotiations with the Gagauzi, and has actively solicited the participation of Turkey in promoting Gagauz culture. Efforts have been undertaken to ensure the cultural viability of other minorities, such as the Bulgarians, within the context of the Republic of Moldova.

Moldova is better positioned now than at any time since independence to overcome the deadlock that characterized its early political life and to bring the separatist crisis to an end. If these twin tasks can be accomplished, the government could then focus on carrying through the economic and political reforms the new nation so desperately requires if it is to thrive. ■

BOOK REVIEWS

ON RUSSIA

The Unquiet Ghost: Russians Remember Stalin

By Adam Hochschild. New York: Viking Press, 1994. 304 pp., \$22.95.

The Unquiet Ghost could easily have been called *An American in Russia*; as much as it is about Stalin-era survivors, it is also about Hochschild discovering the complexities of Russia's people and the task of documenting a largely oral history. Fortunately, the author's self-conscious musings do not obscure the more important story—how Russians coped with the physical and psychological traumas imposed by a paranoid, neurotic Stalin and his obsequious hordes. Hochschild begins his journey with Memorial, a group that wants to document the truth about Stalin's victims without instigating Nuremberg-like persecutions: "practically the whole country—one part denouncing, one part judging, a third shooting people, a fourth guarding the camps [were complicit in the gulag]." Similarly, Hochschild tries to use his collage of survivors, witnesses, NKVD interrogators, KGB records, academics, and enthusiastic Russian guides to delve into the character of the Stalin era and ponder its greater meaning: "The essential wish to create a better, more just society uneasily shares space, in our hearts, with the wish to wield the power for such creation. The ruins of Stalin's Russia are a museum of what happens when a country loses sight of the first, and gives in to the second." *The Unquiet Ghost* is an interesting passkey to the minds and memories of Stalin survivors—albeit from an American point of view.

Melissa J. Sherman

The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War

By Raymond L. Garthoff. Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution, 1994. 834 pp., \$44.95.

The "triumphalism" that followed the cessation of the cold war and the demise of the Soviet Union—especially in the United States—is now a distant memory; the end of history seems to have missed its appointment with destiny and the "last man" is nowhere to be found. But while the easy accounts of how the cold war ended continue to flow ("we won" because we bankrupted the Soviet Union by engaging it in a defense-spending contest it could not keep pace with), more serious attempts such as this work by Raymond Garthoff have begun to appear. Although historical details sometimes overwhelm the analysis, *The Great Transition* is essential for gaining perspective

on the last phase of American-Soviet relations. Not a dispassionate book (there is an especially scathing critique of the cynical measures the United States used to implement the Reagan Doctrine, which aimed to "roll back" communism in the developing world), it is one that renders its judgments clearly, wisely, and authoritatively.

William W. Finan, Jr.

Russia 2010 and What It Means for the World

By Daniel Yergin and Thane Gustafson. New York: Random House, 1994. 300 pp., \$23.

What can we expect in Russia at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century? Yergin and Gustafson give us a series of choices in this "history" of the future, all of which have as their endpoint a distinctly Russian style of capitalism. The scenario that rings truest—and the one based most closely on current trends—is that of "muddling down," a label that explains itself. However, as the authors note, this scenario—like the Russian present—is a time bomb waiting to explode if the conditions it contains are not addressed, and real change implemented.

W. W. F.

The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR

By Robert J. Kaiser. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. 471 pp., \$65.

Fields of study once considered marginal to understanding political change—anthropology, geography, religion—have become necessary tools as the world has exploded into a flurry of conflicts that render much traditional political analysis useless. Kaiser, a geographer, has taken on the subject of nationalism, and looking at it from a geographer's perspective, makes much clearer an opaque subject that is central to understanding the Soviet past and the Eurasian future.

W. W. F. ■

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

AUGUST 1994

ALBANIA

Aug. 23—State radio says Greece expelled 1,500 Albanians August 19 and returned the body of an illegal immigrant killed by police as he attempted to flee a roundup.

ALGERIA

Aug. 3—In Algiers, suspected Muslim militants kill 5 French government employees at an embassy complex; 56 foreigners have been killed since last September in an Islamic militant campaign to rid Algeria of foreigners.
Aug. 4—Belgium asks its citizens to leave Algeria and the Netherlands closes its embassy.

BANGLADESH

Aug. 3—Writer Taslima Nasrin appears before the High Court in Dhaka on a charge of offending the religious sentiment of Muslims; she is granted bail but goes back into hiding because of death threats from Muslim fundamentalists. Nasrin was quoted as saying the Koran should be "thoroughly revised" to eliminate encouragements to discrimination against women.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Aug. 5—Bosnian Serb forces seize armored vehicles and weapons held by UN troops in the 12.5-mile-radius exclusion zone the UN has set up around Sarajevo; NATO warplanes destroy a Bosnian Serb anti-tank weapon illegally located in the exclusion zone.
Aug. 6—Following the NATO attack, Bosnian Serbs fire mortars into Sarajevo, again violating the no-weapons exclusion zone; no casualties are reported.
Aug. 16—Relief flights to Sarajevo resume; the flights were suspended 5 days ago after a plane delivering relief supplies was fired on.
Aug. 29—UN and International Red Cross observers say that in the last week the Bosnian Serbs have forced more than 2,000 Muslims from their homes in towns in northeast Bosnia.

BURUNDI

Aug. 9—In Bujumbura, the capital, at least 15 people are dead after 3 days of street violence and strikes that have shut down the city; the incidents, mainly perpetrated by Tutsi youth gangs, began after the arrest of Mathias Hitimana, leader of the Tutsi-dominated Party for the Reconciliation of the People, who on August 7 called for a general protest strike. In the rural north, as many as 2,000 people, most of them Hutu refugees from Rwanda, have been killed in recent Hutu-Tutsi violence, relief officials say.
Aug. 13—In Kirundo, a Nicaraguan UN worker is killed and 5 of his fellows wounded by gunfire from unknown gunmen.
Aug. 15—The government has rejected a UN offer to deploy a peacekeeping force in Burundi, *The New York Times* reports.
Aug. 16—Hitimana is released.

CAMBODIA

Aug. 6—The National Security Ministry says the Khmer Rouge is holding 14 hostages, including 3 foreign tourists kid-

napped in a July 13 train ambush in Kampot province in which at least 13 people were killed.

CHINA

Aug. 8—After the government's announcement July 31 that new stock issues would not be permitted for the rest of the year, trading on the Shanghai exchange reaches a 1-day record of \$1.34 billion, 4 times higher than the total in Hong Kong.
Aug. 24—The cabinet orders government at all levels to fight inflation, which in 35 major cities in July reached an annual rate of 24.2%; the directive mandates increased supplies of goods, especially food, and punishment for price-gouging and other economic crimes.

COLOMBIA

Aug. 9—Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas, leader of Colombia's Communist Party and a representative of both the Communists and the leftist Patriotic Union in the Colombian Senate, is assassinated in Bogotá. No group claims responsibility for the shooting.

CUBA

Aug. 4—The national legislature approves a new law that authorizes an income tax; the Communist government abolished most taxes 27 years ago.
Aug. 28—President Fidel Castro announces that Cubans trying to flee may not take children or teenagers aboard unsafe boats; the announcement is Castro's first formal comment on a major Cuban exodus that began following an August 5 speech in which he declared that any Cubans who wished to leave could do so.

EGYPT

Aug. 26—Militants from the Islamic Group fire on a tourist bus in Naq Hammadi, killing 1 Spaniard and wounding 2 others.
Aug. 27—The Islamic Group warns scheduled participants in the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo next month to stay away or risk death.

FRANCE

Aug. 15—International terrorist Ilich Ramírez Sánchez, known as "Carlos the Jackal," arrested in Sudan yesterday, is extradited to France. Carlos led the kidnapping of 11 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ministers in Vienna in 1975 in which 3 people died; he will be tried for the murder of 2 French intelligence agents that year.

GERMANY

Aug. 9—In Sindelfingen, outside Stuttgart, a mosque is destroyed in a firebombing; police suspect right-wing militants or Kurds.
Aug. 10—Police at the international airport in Munich seize 10.5 ounces of plutonium 239 from baggage from a flight from Moscow, arresting 3 Spanish and Colombian couriers in what they say was a \$250-million deal for 8.8 pounds of

plutonium; this is the 3d such seizure in Germany this summer in what police believe is a well-organized scheme to smuggle weapons-grade nuclear material out of Russia and eastern Europe and sell it to foreign governments or terrorist groups; 11 people are under arrest. The Russian Atomic Energy Ministry says no plutonium or enriched uranium is missing from any of its facilities.

Aug. 23—In Moscow, Bernd Schmidbauer, Germany's intelligence coordinator, and Russian security and nuclear officials agree to cooperate in preventing the smuggling of weapons-grade nuclear materials.

Aug. 31—Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chancellor Helmut Kohl preside over a ceremony in Berlin marking the withdrawal of Russian troops from Germany; Soviet soldiers arrived 49 years ago to liberate Germany from the Nazi regime; the last 2,000 troops will complete the turnover of bases and depart by mid-September. In a 5-year operation, Russia has withdrawn 700,000 troops and 500,000 civilians from the former Eastern bloc. Germany has contributed \$9 billion in transport and housing costs.

HAITI

Aug. 1—President Émile Jonassaint declares a state of siege and urges Haitians to prepare to defend themselves in the event of an invasion; all constitutional rights are suspended and primary government functions are transferred to the military.

Aug. 16—The US closes its refugee processing centers outside Port-au-Prince, the capital, to new applicants.

Aug. 29—In Port-au-Prince, gunmen kill Roman Catholic priest Jean-Marie Vincent, a supporter of the ousted elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Aug. 31—After withholding humanitarian fuel deliveries for 1 month, the military government releases 500,000 gallons of fuel to relief agencies.

INDIA

Aug. 8—In Srinagar, the capital of Jammu and Kashmir state, the government pulls back troops surrounding the Hazratbal mosque, the region's holiest Muslim shrine; the troops had been stationed there after a standoff last fall over an alleged arms cache inside. The government also extends emergency rule in the state for 6 months; a bomb killed 9 people and wounded more than 50 in the city last weekend.

ISRAEL

Aug. 26—Near Tel Aviv, 2 Israeli construction workers are killed by members of the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas.

JAPAN

Aug. 14—Environment Minister Shin Sakurai resigns after China and South Korea condemn his remarks at an August 12 news conference in which he portrayed Japanese attacks in World War II as liberating Asian countries from Western colonialism.

Aug. 31—Japan will establish a \$1-billion, 10-year program with South Korea and other Asian countries that will include youth exchanges and job training for women, *The New York Times* reports; the program will be symbolic reparation for up to 200,000 women forced to work in brothels for Japanese troops in World War II.

JORDAN

Aug. 8—Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin visits King Hussein at Aqaba and presides over the official opening of the

1st border crossing, at Arava, under the terms of the peace agreement Israel and Jordan signed last month.

KOREA, SOUTH

Aug. 15—In a speech on the anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese rule, President Kim Young Sam offers to take the lead in financing and building light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea if the north allows full international inspection of nuclear sites; this "could well become the very 1st joint project for national development" leading to a reunified Korea, Kim says.

LESOTHO

Aug. 17—Troops fire on demonstrators marching on the royal palace to protest King Letsie III's dissolution earlier today of Lesotho's 1st democratically chosen government, which was elected last year; at least 4 people are killed and 10 wounded. The king said he would reinstate his father, King Moshoeshoe, who was forced from the throne by the military in 1990, and appoint a provisional council to run the country until new elections are held.

MEXICO

Aug. 25—With 92% of the vote tallied in national elections held August 21, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) appears to have won the presidency with 50% of the vote. Zedillo's total represents the lowest level of support for any PRI presidential candidate since 1929. National Action Party candidate Diego Fernández de Cevallos received 27% of the vote, and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, 17%.

NIGERIA

Aug. 3—Police in Lagos, the country's largest city, fire on protesters at peaceful rallies against the military government, killing 2 people. Three others die when youths attack shopkeepers not participating in the nationwide strike called last month by the 5-million-member Nigeria Labor Congress to unseat the government.

Aug. 6—Moshood Abiola has refused the release on bail offered him by a federal judge in Abuja on condition that he not meet opposition leaders or leave the country, *The New York Times* reports; Abiola, the apparent winner of the annulled presidential elections last year, was arrested in June for treason after declaring himself president.

Aug. 15—Police in Lagos shut down *The Guardian*, the country's most respected newspaper.

Aug. 23—Some 50 leading citizens have been arrested since August 20, *The New York Times* reports; those detained include former government ministers, army commanders, and labor leaders. The pro-democracy protest turned violent last week, including firebombings of ministers' houses.

A federal high court judge in Lagos temporarily reinstates the leadership of the country's 2 main oilworkers unions, removed August 17 by General Sani Abacha, who heads the military government. The unions are spearheading a strike to restore democracy that began July 4; the action has halved oil exports and reduced government revenues by 40%.

PALESTINIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY

Aug. 15—Palestinian authorities arrest 13 Islamic militants following a number of roadside attacks on Israelis in the Gaza Strip for which the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas has claimed responsibility.

Aug. 25—Israel and the Palestinians sign an “early empowerment” accord under which Israel will transfer jurisdiction over health, education, and welfare services in the Israeli-occupied West Bank to the Palestinians beginning August 29, and tax authority over the West Bank this fall.

POLAND

Aug. 18—New Internal Affairs Minister Marian Zacharski, a spy sentenced to life in prison in the US in 1981 and later exchanged for Western agents, resigns after President Lech Walesa rejects his appointment. State television has reported that all but 1 senior official at the intelligence services are holdovers from the Communist regime.

RUSSIA

Aug. 24—Wages withheld in July amounted to \$1 billion, *The New York Times* reports. The monthly inflation rate has declined to 6%, compared to 26% a year ago.

Aug. 31—Russia pulls out the last of its troops in Estonia and Latvia, 54 years after the Soviet Union’s 1940 annexation of the Baltic states under the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. The last Russian soldiers in Lithuania left last year. At one time as many as 200,000 Soviet troops were based in the 3 states.

RWANDA

Aug. 2—Eight of 17 cabinet ministries in the government formed last month after the Rwandan Patriotic Front’s victory in the civil war have gone to RPF members, *The New York Times* reports.

Aug. 4—Aid workers put the death toll from cholera and dysentery epidemics in Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire during the past few weeks at between 20,000 and 30,000.

Aug. 8—In Bujumbura, Burundi, US Assistant Secretary of State John Shattuck announces that Rwanda has agreed to a UN-sponsored tribunal that will try those suspected of genocidal acts and other human rights violations in the April–July civil war.

Aug. 12—Only about 200,000 of the 1.2 million refugees in Zaire have gone back to Rwanda after the RPF’s victory, *The New York Times* reports; atrocities by RPF soldiers against returned civilians have been reported.

Aug. 21—About 150,000 refugees have arrived in the last 2 weeks at Bukavu, Zaire, *The New York Times* reports; Bukavu is across from the French-protected zone in southwestern Rwanda, which French troops are pulling out of tomorrow.

Aug. 22—Some 2,300 French troops complete their withdrawal from the protected zone they established 2 months ago in the southwest; the new government says its troops will take control of the entire region.

Aug. 25—A spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees reports “a virtual state of war” in the camps for Rwandan refugees in eastern Zaire.

SOMALIA

Aug. 22—In Burleego, 7 Indian UN peacekeepers are killed and 9 others wounded in an ambush by a Somali militia.

Aug. 31—Somali militias are believed responsible for today’s mortar or grenade attack on a field hospital in Baidoa that killed 3 Indian military doctors serving with the UN; 130 UN members have died in violence in Somalia.

SRI LANKA

Aug. 17—Final results from parliamentary elections yesterday show the 9-party opposition People’s Alliance led by Chan-

drika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga won 105 seats in the 225-member assembly. The United National Party headed by President D. B. Wijetunga, which has held power for 17 years, won 94 seats, and 6 smaller parties won 26 seats. At least 35,000 people have been killed since 1982 in Tamil and Sinhalese insurgencies against the government.

Aug. 20—Prime Minister Kumaratunga extends an island-wide curfew designed to dampen political violence; 2 people have been killed in clashes since her swearing-in yesterday.

UNITED KINGDOM

Northern Ireland

Aug. 31—The Irish Republican Army announces a cease-fire. Political violence has claimed 3,168 lives since 1969, when Catholics began their movement to unite with the Irish Republic.

UNITED STATES

Aug. 2—The government announces it is suspending plans to keep Haitian refugees in “safe havens” in the Caribbean; it says it will instead detain all Haitian refugees at Guantánamo Bay naval base in Cuba.

Aug. 10—The government grants asylum to 25 of the 26 Haitians rescued yesterday from a boat reportedly stolen from the Cuban military and whose military commander was allegedly killed by the refugees; Cuba has demanded the return of the refugees.

Aug. 19—The US announces it will no longer automatically grant asylum to Cuban refugees, but will instead hold them at Guantánamo Bay.

Aug. 20—President Bill Clinton announces that Americans may no longer send cash to Cuba and that all charter flights to the island have been suspended.

Aug. 27—The Defense Department says the US will pay \$100,000 in compensation to each of the families of the 11 foreign military officers killed when the US shot down 2 American helicopters over Iraq in April.

The US announces it will begin talks with Cuba on the refugee crisis. Since August 19, the US has intercepted 17,000 Cuban refugees, many of whom are now being held at Guantánamo Bay naval base.

Aug. 30—The 13-member Caribbean Community and Common Market announces that it backs a US plan to invade Haiti; Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, and Jamaica pledge to supply 266 soldiers for the 10,000-strong proposed invasion force to be led by the US.

Panama and Honduras announce that they will provide “safe havens” for up to 15,000 Cuban refugees.

Aug. 31—General Mike Williams, commander of the refugee operation at Guantánamo, reports that about 50 Cubans are fleeing straight to the base each day rather than trying to reach Florida; as of today, 15,176 Cubans and 14,308 Haitians are in the refugee camps at Guantánamo Bay.

YUGOSLAVIA

Aug. 4—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic announces that because the Bosnian Serbs rejected the most recent international peace plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Yugoslavian government will no longer allow trade with Bosnian Serb-held areas of Bosnia, except for medicine and food, and that Bosnian Serb leaders will not be allowed to enter Yugoslavia. ■

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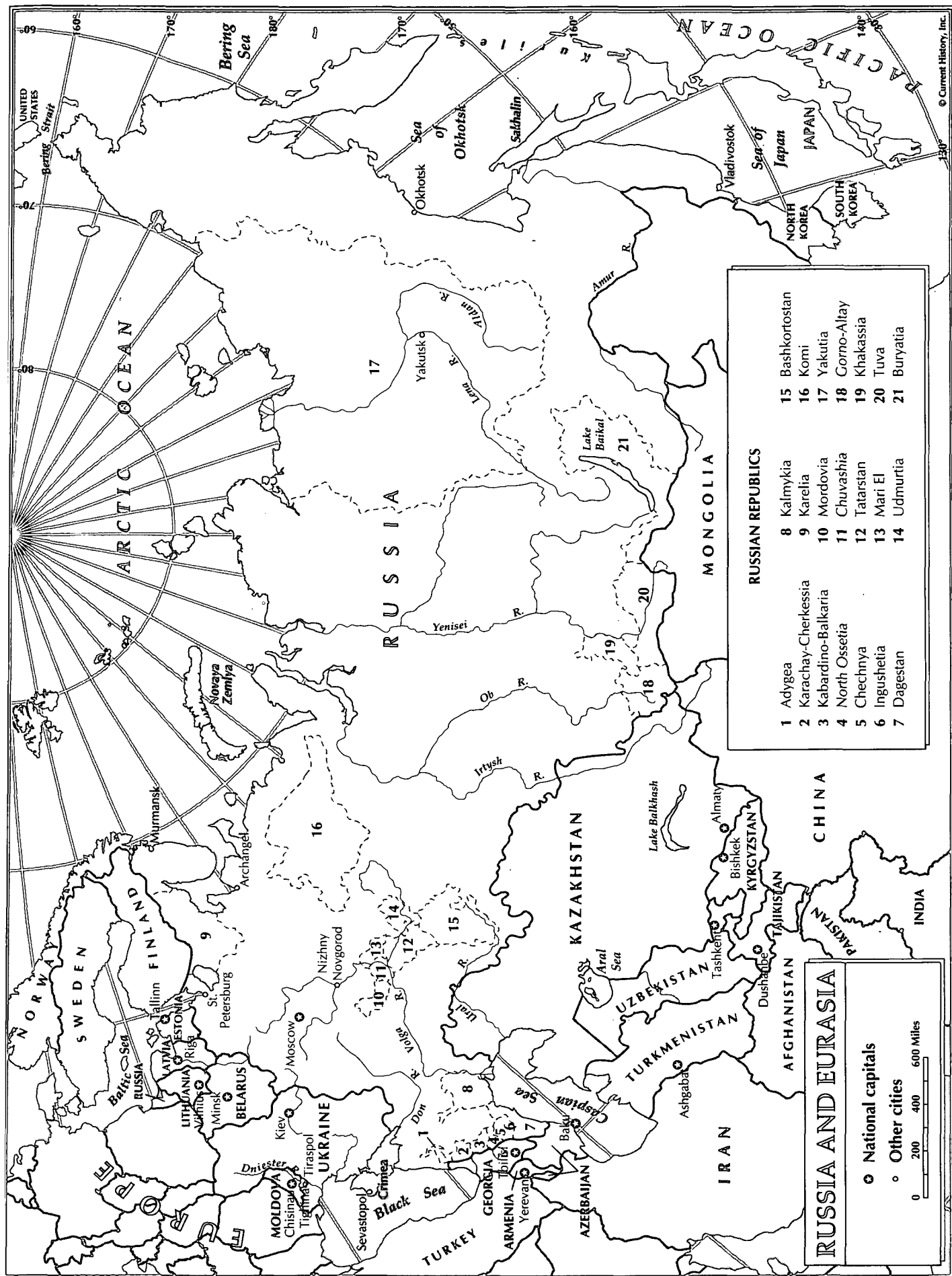
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